



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

279 d. 57

= A. 6. 4339

= A.G. W. 70







# THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH POETRY.



*Of this Edition 500 Copies are printed on small paper,  
and 50 on large.*

HISTORY OF  
ENGLISH POETRY  
FROM THE TWELFTH TO THE CLOSE  
OF THE SIXTEENTH  
CENTURY.

BY THOMAS WARTON, B.D.

FELLOW OF TRIN. COLL., OXFORD; F.S.A.; PROFESSOR OF  
POETRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

WITH A PREFACE BY RICHARD PRICE, AND NOTES VARIORUM.

EDITED BY W. CAREW HAZLITT.

WITH NEW NOTES AND OTHER ADDITIONS BY SIR FREDERIC MADDEN, K.H., F.R.S.;  
THOMAS WRIGHT, M.A., F.S.A.; W. ALDIS WRIGHT, M.A.; REV.  
WALTER W. SKEAT, M.A.; RICHARD MORRIS, LL.D;  
F. J. FURNIVAL, M.A.; AND THE EDITOR.

WITH INDEXES OF NAMES AND SUBJECTS.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON:  
REEVES AND TURNER, 196, STRAND.

1871.



CHISWICK PRESS I-- PRINTED BY WHITTINGHAM AND WILKINS,  
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.



## Preface to the Present Edition.



F the celebrated work, of which a new and improved edition is now submitted to the public, there have been three former impressions. The first appeared in three volumes quarto, between the years 1774 and 1781.<sup>1</sup> In 1790 the author died, leaving behind him eleven sheets, or 88 pages, of a fourth volume, for which it was reported incorrectly at the time, that the complete materials existed, and would be edited by his brother.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Joseph Warton, however, did not add a single line to the work, or in any way assist in the accomplishment of what was felt then to be a desirable object, the fulfilment of the original plan by bringing down the narrative to the commencement of the last century. It does not follow, certainly, that Dr. Warton would have executed the task in a manner worthy of his brother's reputation; but at any rate, as the historian left it, so it has remained.

The first volume was printed in 1774, and was brought to a second edition in 1775: the second volume appeared in 1777, and the third,

<sup>1</sup> Daniel Prince, the Oxford bookseller, in a letter to Mr. Nichols of August 4, 1783, says, "Mr. Warton's *History of English Poetry* will be at press again at Michaelmas next. . . . As Mr. Warton's *History of English Poetry* says, 'London: Printed, &c.' you might think it was done there. The number, 1500; 1300 or more go off directly of each volume."

<sup>2</sup> In a letter to Nichols of June 7, 1790, Prince observes: "I very much fear the fourth volume of the *History of English Poetry* will not be finished, as not above eleven sheets are printed." In another of August 17, from the same to the same, there is the following passage: "I cannot learn (but indeed neither Mr. Price, nor Mr. Davy are here to get better information) that any materials, much less a volume and materials for another, are in the hands of Dr. [Joseph] Warton. By this day's coach I send a packet to Dr. W. containing the sheets printed of the fourth volume, 88 pages; and am well informed that the Doctor engages to finish the volume from his brother's materials; and the sooner, perhaps, as a large part of the copy-money is withheld, till the work be finished."

in 1781.<sup>1</sup> The fragment of vol. 4, which is usually deficient in copies, was not issued till 1790; and it was not till 1806 that an Index was added.

Warton's History seems to have continued out of print for many years, till, I apprehend, its scarcity and consequent costliness induced a publisher to undertake a new edition, with corrections, augmentations and notes by several of the most eminent antiquaries and critics of that age. This acceptable publication made its appearance in four octavo volumes in 1824, prefaced by an extremely interesting and scholarly Introduction from the pen of Mr. Richard Price, and enriched by the comments and emendations of Ritson, Douce, Ashby, Park, and the editor himself.<sup>2</sup>

If there was a serious weakness in this meritorious attempt to place Warton's labours before the world in a more useful and permanent shape, this weakness may perhaps, without undue presumption, be characterised as a systematic want of lucidity and method in the arrangement of the added matter, in the retention of too many of Warton's self-evident mistakes, and in the admission, doubtless through inadvertence, of a very considerable crop of new errors, not chargeable in any way to the original writer. It must be allowed, however, that, as far as the first point is concerned, it was difficult in many cases to make a satisfactory selection out of a large mass of available material, and the impartial temper of Mr. Price led him to place side by side conflicting opinions upon an important question, rather than to assume the responsibility of decision. Whatever may be thought of the wisdom of this course, it had undeniably the mischievous consequence of swelling the total bulk of the publication very considerably, and of transforming the foot-notes into a species of arena, where contending critics have their respective arguments registered at large. Of the annotators of the new Warton, Mr. Thomas Park was perhaps the most considerable, and Mr. Park's additions and corrections have unquestionably an enduring interest and value. He was unluckily, however, not very exact in his quotations, and the greater part of his extracts from rare English books have been necessarily collated at no slight sacrifice of time with the originals. In many places also the notes of Park and others have been silently corrected or enlarged without any special indication to such effect, for the sake of preserving as much as possible the homogeneity and clearness of the narrative. The notes of Dr. Ashby are scarcely of any consequence:

<sup>1</sup> *The History of English Poetry, from the close of the Eleventh to the Commencement of the Eighteenth Century. To which are prefixed Two Dissertations: I. On the Origin of Romantic Fiction in Europe. II. On the Introduction of Learning into England.* By Thomas Warton, B.D., Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, and of the Society of Antiquaries, and late Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford. London [Oxford], 4 vols. 4to, 1774-81-90-1806.

<sup>2</sup> *The History of English Poetry, &c.* A New Edition, carefully revised. With Numerous Additional Notes, by the late Mr. Ritson, the late Dr. Ashby, Mr. Douce, Mr. Park, and other eminent antiquaries, and by the Editor [Mr. Richard Price.] Lond. 1824, 8vo. Four volumes.

nor would Ritson and Douce have attained so high a repute, if they had done nothing but gloss the *History of English Poetry*.

The octavo edition of 1824 became in its turn a scarce and dear book, notwithstanding its many defects and numerous blemishes, and in 1840 a reprint was made by the same firm in *three* volumes octavo, purporting to contain new matter, as well as all the old.<sup>1</sup>

The edition of 1840 is printed in a smaller type than the preceding four-volume impression; but I have always suspected, and I firmly believe, that, while certain additions were made to this issue, and notably a good many notes by Sir Frederic Madden in the first volume, the text has been abridged, in order to bring the work within a narrower compass; for in the edition of 1840 there are *five hundred pages* less than in that of 1824—a difference not to be explained altogether, or even to a very large extent, by the economy exercised in the type. This curtailment would not have been by any means a circumstance to be regretted, if the process had been directed towards an elimination of the matter which Warton had rather inconsiderately, in many cases, admitted into his volumes, as well as of that considerable mass of bibliographical detail which, as it presents itself indiscriminately in the body of the *History* and in the *Notes*, is not only useless, but, from its grossly faulty character, very much worse than that.

The superintendent of the edition of 1840, however, left this serious drawback to the work wholly untouched, and instead of laying his axe to the root of the evil, which I think we may fairly complain of, seems to have cut out three or four hundred pages (allowing for the smaller type) on another principle. I have not compared the two editions line for line, and should be remarkably unwilling to do so, as it would not repay the trouble; but the fact cannot be contested, that there is a discrepancy between them, to the disadvantage, it may perhaps be said, of that of 1840, of 500 pp. octavo.

Sir Frederic Madden has obligingly informed me that “he had originally offered to continue the *Notes* on Warton; but the publisher was averse to the enlargement of the work or possible delay.” This accounts for the disappearance of Sir F. Madden’s initial M. at the end of some of the additional notes after the early pages of the second volume. Our indefatigable antiquary, Mr. Thomas Wright, F.S.A., and also Mr. Taylor, the printer (I believe) inserted a few improvements; and beyond this, the so-called *best* edition of Warton’s *History* is a mere reprint of the book published sixteen years before by that accomplished scholar, Mr. Richard Price.

The time seems to have arrived, when the truth should be spoken

<sup>1</sup> *The History of English Poetry, &c. To which are prefixed Three Dissertations, &c.* By Thomas Warton, B.D. &c. From the Edition of 1824, superintended by the late Richard Price, Esq. Including the *Notes* of Mr. Ritson, Dr. Ashby, Mr. Douce, and Mr. Park. Now further improved by the corrections and additions of several eminent Antiquaries. In three volumes, 1840, 8vo. The four-volume edition of 1824 contains altogether, 2065 pages, the three volume reprint (with additions not in its predecessor) has only 1596 pages.

freely. Warton was an amiable man, a scholar, and a person of sound literary tastes. His reading had been considerable, and his views in many points were unusually enlarged. He possessed, in no mean degree, that faculty so deficient in some who have followed him in the same line of investigation—the faculty of *selection*. He enjoyed the advantages of a pleasing and easy style, and of the friendly co-operation of some of the most eminent antiquaries and poetical students of the age. He entered on his task, moreover, under exceptionally favourable circumstances, when criticism upon old English literature was in a very unformed and immature state, and when, therefore, it was tolerably certain that an indulgent estimate would be taken of any work on the subject, which should be of respectable merit. But Warton was excessively indolent, equally careless, and, it must be candidly owned, not particularly well-informed on several branches of the inquiry which he had proposed to himself. It was his rare good fortune to be enabled to take possession of the field at a period when there was absolutely no competitor in sight; and, added to that, but of course in a certain degree consequently upon it, the very uncommon distinction has since fallen to his lot of being glossed by the foremost scholars (in this particular way) of each succeeding generation. These gentlemen, instead of aspiring to produce a new *History of English Poetry*, worthy of the subject and of the country, have uniformly condescended to become the exponents and scholia of Warton, a man, with all his virtues and abilities, certainly in many essential respects incompetent for his self-appointed task. But, in an unremunerative and too often even thankless walk of literature, there must always be a difficulty in meeting with any one who, with the leisure and fortune, combines the capacity and learning requisite for carrying out to general satisfaction a plan so large and so important. It would certainly have been perfectly out of the question for the present editor to have entered even upon *his* enterprise with any prospect of fair success, had not help come from so many quarters, and those points which were beyond the range of his own reading and experience been accomplished by kind and zealous associates.

It is astonishing that Warton's original misprints and errors should, in five cases out of six, have been retained not only in 1824, but in 1840. I can scarcely undertake to explain how it can have happened that so valuable a work as the *History of English Poetry*, after being submitted to so many excellent judges, so many competent antiquaries, and so many critical eyes, has continued to be disfigured by the greater part of the mistakes of various kinds, into which the original writer was betrayed, partly by the imperfect state of information in his own time, and partly by his more than average negligence. But indeed it was hardly perhaps to be expected that a casual or ordinary reader of Warton should detect all the errors, or even all the chief, in Warton's volumes; the so-called editions of 1824 and 1840 may more fairly be considered as reproductions of Warton's own text augmented by a sufficiently copious but

somewhat loose and desultory gloss, than as critical republications brought down to the existing state of knowledge ; and it is to be feared that many are apt to escape, even where, as in the present case, the work has been assiduously examined and revised page by page and line by line, both text and notes, and that not once, but repeatedly.

The interests of literature appeared to me to be superior to any sentimental delicacy, and I felt that the erroneous theories and assertions of Warton on many cardinal points ought not, if it could be helped, to be allowed any longer to pass current. But, in fact, a large number of the emendations, which have now been introduced into the text, might with great advantage have been introduced in 1824.

If Warton's mistakes and omissions were such as drew upon him, eighty years ago, the well-deserved but intemperate censure of Ritson, his contemporary, what shall be said, and what will be thought, of his shortcomings in the present advanced state of knowledge and information ? Warton's ignorance of some of the most important and meritorious productions which appeared within the period which he undertook to treat and illustrate, is rather startling ; but bibliography and philology had not, in his day, attained the scientific elevation, which is now accorded to them, nor have they done so, indeed, till of comparatively recent years.

I applied to a friend for his opinion as to what he thought most essential in another reprint of Warton. In his reply, he said : " I can only say generally, that I think the wrong, obsolete, and insufficient parts of Warton should be cut out, and made right by insertions in his text between brackets ; that LARGE additions should be made to him, not only of the new printed matter brought out since his time, but from the catalogues of MSS. in the Universities, Sir T. Philipps's library, Lord Ashburnham's, Bodleian, &c., that all his texts should be read with the best MSS., and all the notes possible incorporated with the text. In the MS. part, at least one-third should be added to his matter, and two years' hard work ought to be given to it, though Mr. Bond of the Museum, by his partial Subject-Catalogue, might save you some of it." Part of this programme I had carried out, before I heard from my friend, part of it I have executed since ; but two years of the hardest work in the world would not see the whole accomplished. At least, I am not at present prepared to enter upon the Herculean labour there shadowed out : nor do I entertain a very sanguine belief, that anybody else will be found to engage in it. But until the Historian of English Poetry shall arise, I humbly trust that my very long advance on all preceding editions of the standard work on the subject may be accepted in the spirit in which it is offered.

In the present edition the undertaking has been conducted on a diametrically opposite principle to that which governed the superintendents of the editions of 1824 and 1840 ; and for the first time a vigorous attempt has been made to consolidate and digest the bewil-

dering and useless heap of foot-notes which, in the lapse of time, have grown up so as to equal in bulk the work itself, and to offer to view a curious tissue of old errors corrected and new errors made. Warton committed a very large number of mistakes, particularly in bibliographical and other *minutiae*, but by no means only in these points. He errs, over and over again, in the age of MSS., the authorship of works, the origin of stories; and his whole narrative is emphatically *slipshod*. His former editors have contented themselves with indicating (to a certain extent) these shortcomings, and respected the integrity of their author even to the retention (side by side with their exposure) of the most transparent oversights and most unequivocal misstatements or misconceptions; of which policy the disadvantage was not merely to disfigure the book at every page, but to mislead inquirers—a still more serious drawback. But it was considered that this was, upon the whole, an embarrassing and inconvenient plan; for the notes of Park and Ritson upon Warton himself, and then the notes of others upon them, and finally the notes which the present editor might have had occasion to introduce upon the preceding editors, threatened to form so perplexing an accumulation of controversial detail, that the reader would have been left in doubt very often, what were really the facts in any given case. Under these circumstances, it has been determined that the text of the work should in every instance be adapted to the present state of information by insertion between brackets of particulars overlooked by Warton and his commentators, or of statements substituted (not without careful reflection) for theirs.

In short, this edition of Warton has been produced on the identical system followed in the successive re-impresions of Blackstone's *Commentaries*. As the state of knowledge advances, we are certainly entitled to take advantage of the progress. I feel that, to a certain extent, I have been instrumental in obliterating Warton; but in my turn, and perhaps at no distant date, the same fate may be my own.

While I have ventured occasionally on the interpolation of a notice relative to some work or author overlooked by Warton, or unknown to him, it must be obvious, that it was impracticable for me, without extending the limits of this book beyond four volumes, to enter into an elaborate criticism upon such authors or works, or to find room in the text for extracts commensurate with those in which Warton himself has indulged perhaps already rather too freely. Many of the publications, of which he furnishes specimens, are in the hands of every student or lover of literature at present; but in his time they were of course not equally accessible. As a rule, nevertheless, they have not been disturbed.

One branch of the present undertaking has proved infinitely more laborious than I anticipated. The state of the extracts in all the former editions was such, with very few exceptions, that it was found necessary to decide on a collation of every passage where it was practicable—in nine cases out of ten—with the originals; and the result of this toilsome operation has been to purge the text of the

work of thousands of errors, more or less serious in their character, and more or less mischievous in their liability to lead the reader astray. From a careful comparison of many of Warton's quotations with the very originals to which he refers, one can only draw the conclusion that he considered the faithful representation of texts as a matter of very subordinate consequence.

A few passages have been omitted. I long hesitated before I resolved to adopt such a course; but the childish absurdities of the statements which these cancelled paragraphs contained, seemed to me, on the whole, scarcely deserving of serious discussion. In one place, our historian had misread *Inimicus MIMICUS*, and had founded on the error an argument in favour of the early patronage of the drama by the English kings. The disappearance of a note printed in all the former editions (edit. 1824, iii. 201), will perhaps be forgiven, when I mention that Warton had therein built up an argument respecting the early drama on a passage in a document, which he read *mimici*, but which he ought to have read *minuti*. In another passage he mistook Rarthus the Homilist for King Arthur. In a fourth place he, from some misrepresentation, it is presumed, of a passage in Geoffrey of Monmouth and his translators, constructed a theory on the origin of romance. Warton, had these slips been pointed out to him, would undoubtedly have expunged the offending passages, and I, in the interests of literature, have only done the same. Besides, there were cases, in which (by an obvious oversight) the same statement was repeated *totidem verbis*, or nearly so; and here the pruning knife was surely, on all accounts, a beneficial instrument.

My main object throughout has been, in fact, to exhibit the latest and present state of knowledge on every given point, and to verify, wherever the opportunity existed, the extracts in the text and notes by collation with the best edition of each work. At the same time, I desire most emphatically to declare that my emendations and changes, whatever they may be worth, touch *facts and figures only*; the opinions, sentiments, and criticisms of Warton, and his language, have been respected throughout; and his estimates of books and their authors I have in no instance presumed to disturb. Instances have frequently occurred, however, in which it has been found desirable to bring together into one focus scattered passages relating to the same person or subject from different parts of the work, with such additions or corrections as the circumstances seemed to demand.

Throughout the volumes, but especially in the first and second sections, the transpositions also have been necessarily numerous, in order to realize a more accurate chronological arrangement of the matter, Warton having been very frequently mistaken as to the dates of inedited authors or compositions. In connection with this particular branch of the subject, a hope may be expressed that the *List of Early English Poems*, introduced into the first section, may prove of some service. The catalogue, of course, cannot pretend to completeness of any kind; but it was thought by those, who were at the pains to compile it specially for the present edition, that it

might have its value as a general guide to the principal productions in our language from A.D. 1200 to A.D. 1500.

To the present edition a considerable body of new notes, chiefly founded on recent discoveries in literary history or archaeology, has been added; and on the other hand some of the old ones, which proceeded from clearly erroneous and obsolete theories or premises, have been expunged, others being substituted for them, where it appeared to be necessary or desirable. To have retained observations or doctrines, of which the sole effect would be to cause confusion, was, so far as the editor's judgment goes, neither a serviceable act to literature nor a profitable occupation of space, which the pressure of fresh and more important matter rendered particularly valuable.

If the present editor should seem to have treated too slightingly the bibliographical notes of Warton himself, Park, Ritson, and others, it must be recollected as his excuse, that his recent *Hand-book of Early English Literature*, 1867, embraces the whole of the information in question, with very large additions and corrections.

Probably the rudest monuments now existing of Scotch poetical and romantic literature are the exceedingly curious remains printed by Mr. Skene in his *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, 1867. Warton does not appear to have considered these and similar works as coming within his design; at least, he has not even touched upon any of them, except in the most incidental and superficial manner. The Anglo-Saxon translation of the Swedish epic of *Beowulf*, indeed, he has introduced; but it was only known to him in one edition, rendered faulty by the editor's ignorance of the language. Warton's work, however, did not profess to start earlier than the close of the eleventh century; and I feared that it would be opening too large and difficult a field of inquiry to supply in these pages to any great extent what he had left unachieved. All that I could hope to do, with much prospect of success, within the compass of these volumes, was the correction of Warton's errors by means of later lights, and the addition of such supplemental text and notes, as were necessary to make the work, as it stood, complete in itself.

Warton has treated the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman eras of English Poetry altogether very cursorily; but this weakness in his book becomes of minor consequence, when it is recollected that, in the first place, Mr. Thomas Wright's *Biographia Britannica Literaria*, 2 vols. 8vo. 1842-6, exactly fills up the chasm, and that (secondly) an entirely new section on the Anglo-Saxon literature has been expressly prepared for this edition of Warton's History, through the kind instrumentality of Mr. Furnivall, by Mr. Henry Sweet of Baliol. Mr. Wright's admirable work, in which all the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman writers are ranged chronologically with notices of their lives and specimens of their authentic productions, should be read as an Introduction to Warton. Conybeare's *Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, 1826, and the last edition of Mr. Thorpe's *Annales Anglo-Saxonica*, 1868, 8vo, may also be mentioned in this connection.

The necessity for a more detailed and accurate account than Warton gave of the rise and progress of Scotish Poetry has been superseded in large measure by the appearance of Dr. Carlyle's edition of Dr. Irving's *History* in 1861. Moreover, since Warton wrote, and indeed since the appearance of the last impression of his book nine and twenty years ago, Mr. Craik and Professor Morley have done much to familiarize us with the beauties and riches of our own Southern poetry, without perhaps superseding to any perceptible extent the earlier work, which still holds its own ground.

On one point, the editor has a few words of explanation, but scarcely of apology, to offer. Warton, without believing in the Chatterton forgeries, lived too near the period of their perpetration, perhaps, to view them with our eyes; and although he repeatedly insinuates, and even more than insinuates, his disbelief in their genuineness, he devoted a whole section to a discussion of their merits and to extracts from the several pieces, of which they consist. The opinion of modern critics upon these alleged relics of the fifteenth century is so unanimous, and that of many contemporaries was so adverse, that I do not think I have performed an unacceptable service in expunging altogether Warton's remarks and selections. These cannot reflect any credit on his memory, and they do not belong to the History of (ancient) English Poetry. No argument can be used in favour of their retention; every argument seems to defend the rejection of the pages, in which they were contained in all the former editions. In the original quarto, they occupy from p. 139 to p. 164 inclusive of the second volume.

This elision has been made with the less scruple, as Warton himself observed that he should have been much more sparing of his extracts, had he not made them before the book was published. Its appearance confirmed his previous suspicions, and he sums up by expressing a regret, that he cannot believe in the genuineness of Rowlie.

It should be recollected, to Horace Walpole's honour, that he was from the very outset stoutly incredulous as to these reputed remains of ancient poetry. His own copy of the edition of 1782, 4to, is filled with his MSS. notes and strictures. Against the opening lines of the *Battle of Hastings* he has written: "Is it credible that these should not be modern lines?" He might well ask the question: yet, if any thing can be possibly more astounding than the belief in the forgeries of Chatterton, it is, I think, that in the forgeries of Ireland.

Among Warton's authorities, the names of Pits and Tanner often occur. It may be necessary, or at least desirable, to point out that, in our day, the credit of neither of those writers stands so high as it did in Warton's time. Modern information has contradicted or modified much of their statements, and the same must be said of Bishop Bale, whose lists of English authors and their works have always appeared to me very loose and flimsy.

At the same time great credit, or rather singular honour, is due, and will always be given, to these pioneers in the two fields of bio-

graphy and bibliography. Nor would it be just to treat too lightly the researches and labours of John Bagford, a man of remarkable assiduity and enthusiasm, and one whom Hearne valued as a friend and fellow-worker. All these persons groped in the dark, and prepared the way for the Ritsons, Haslewoods, &c. of later date. It has been, absurdly enough, laid to Bagford's charge, that he was a destroyer, and not a preserver, of books : as if it could be taken for granted, that the volumes, which he stripped of their title-pages, would have survived in their full integrity, had he let them alone ! There are many instances (on the contrary) in which by saving a title, which otherwise would have infallibly shared the fate of the remainder of the publication, this bibliographer has given us notice of the existence of a book or edition, of which we should have been ignorant. A more shallow and illogical line of argument was never proposed. I differ emphatically from those who decline to admit Bagford among literary benefactors.

A very agreeable duty remains to me. I have to confess myself under very great obligations to several able and zealous coadjutors in this somewhat arduous undertaking ; and the help which I have been so extremely fortunate as to secure will appear to others, doubtless, as it appeared to myself, so much the more valuable, that it proceeded from gentlemen, each of whom contributed assistance in a department of inquiry specially his own. In the first place Sir Frederic Madden, late Keeper of the MSS. in the British Museum, and a ripe scholar and antiquary, not only permitted me to make what use I pleased of the notes contributed by him to the edition of 1840, but communicated to me from his own copy several new notes and corrections of misprints. Mr. Thomas Wright most liberally undertook to revise for me the Preface originally written by Mr. Richard Price for the edition of 1824, and prepared for insertion among the *Dissertations* a corrected and enlarged text of the *Essay on the Seven Sages*, edited for the Percy Society in 1846. Mr. Furnivall took the Chaucer sections ; Mr. Skeat partly rewrote the chapter on *Piers Ploughman* ; Mr. Henry Sweet, of Balliol College, Oxford, presented me with an entirely new section on Anglo-Saxon literature, and both Mr. Furnivall and Dr. Richard Morris furnished miscellaneous notes here and there ; while Mr. D. Donaldson of Paisley, the editor of the Early English Text Society's *Troy-Book*, supplied me very obligingly with some corrections and additions under this particular head. In Mr. Richard Morris, LL.D., Mr. W. Aldis Wright, M.A. ; Mr. George Waring, M.A. ; and Mr. J. W. Hales, M.A. I have also to recognise kind helpers and associates in my labour. From Mr. Bond, Keeper of the MSS. in the British Museum, Mr. Thompson of the same department, and Mr. George Bullen, of the Printed Book Department, I have experienced the most obliging attention to my inquiries.

Mr. W. B. Rye, Keeper of the Printed Book Department in the British Museum, placed at my service his annotated copy of the last edition of Warton. To Mr. Henry Pyne, Mr. Edward Brock,

and all my other coadjutors I hereby return my most emphatic and grateful acknowledgments. Among the eminent booksellers of London, Mr. Lilly, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Quaritch, and Mr. Pickering furnished me in the most liberal manner with books for the purpose of collation or reference. I was convinced, at an early stage of my devotion to the present task, that it could only be accomplished satisfactorily on the co-operative principle, and I am sure that I shall always look back with pleasureable emotions at the cordial response which was made to my appeals in many quarters where I was not entitled to expect such kindness and generosity.

I have also to offer my best thanks to the Rev. H. O. Coxe, M.A., Keeper of the Bodleian library, to Mr. George A. Greenhill, of St. John's College, Cambridge, and to Mr. Jeffery, of the British Museum, for aid in the prosecution of a search for annotated copies of Warton's work at Oxford and Cambridge, and in the national collection.

Two Indexes, one of Names, the other of Subjects, accompany this new edition. Those attached to the preceding, in quarto and octavo alike, were so imperfect and unsatisfactory in every respect as to place it out of the question to reprint them. The original Index to the book was prepared by Mr. Fillingham, and was not published till 1806; that which is attached to the editions of 1824 and 1840 seems to be based upon it. The present Indexes possess the advantage of an uniform numeration, instead of the rather perplexing mixture of Roman and Arabic figures, and have been compiled with a special view to the large accession of new matter introduced into the work on its re-appearance (thanks to others) under exceptionally favourable auspices.

A Memoir and Portrait of Warton will be found in Nichols' *Anecdotes*, vi. 175, *et seqq.* A letter from Warton to Percy is published in *Current Notes* for February, 1854.

Daniel Prince, the bookseller, in a letter to Nichols of June 7, 1790, gives an odd account of T. Warton and the Jelly-Bag Society. "I fear," he writes, "there is little chance of getting any of the scattered remains of the late Mr. Warton, from any of those who had his daily conversation, which, no doubt, was full of pleasing anecdotes and useful remarks. His time was too much confined to his own Society, where, being used to his speech, he was pretty well understood. To others, his defective organs of speech rendered him often unintelligible, especially as wit often depends on a word. As to myself, of late years, I hardly ever could understand him. In enumerating his publications the *Oxford Sausage* is not mentioned, in which are some of his best familiar fragments—such as the *Parson's Wig*, the *Dunning Tradesman*, both with prints; and *The Newsman's Verses*, and also *Mrs. Dorothy Spreadbury's Oxford Sausages*, with her print. . . . Poor Thomas's papers were in a sad litter, and his brother Joe has made matters worse by confusedly cramming all together, sending them to Winchester, and purposing to take his own time to put them

in order. . . . The Jelly-Bag Society's story is well founded. Some say it was held at Joan Erle's in St. Thomas's parish, but more likely at Mr. Yeoman's in Jesus College-lane. The place, whichever it was, was certainly discovered by beating a drum, which called out T. W. (who was always drawn by that sound to the window), with his jelly-bag cap on. The Society existed eight or ten years—with a notice that A. B. (but more than one W.) would be in the cap. Mr. W. could not give, not even his old cloathes; his very shoes, stockings, and wigs laid [lay] about in abundance. . . . He has the credit of having no private vices or follies."

W. C. H.

KENSINGTON, *April*, 1871.

TO HIS GRACE  
G E O R G E,  
DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH,  
MARQUIS OF BLANDFORD,  
KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER,  
A JUDGE AND A PATRON OF THE  
POLITE ARTS,  
THIS WORK IS MOST HUMBLY INSCRIBED  
BY HIS GRACE'S MOST OBLIGED,  
AND MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,  
THOMAS WARTON.





## Author's Preface.



N an age advanced to the highest degree of refinement, that species of curiosity commences, which is busied in contemplating the progress of social life, in displaying the gradations of science, and in tracing the transitions from barbarism to civility.

That these speculations should become the favourite pursuits and the fashionable topics of such a period is extremely natural. We look back on the savage condition of our ancestors with the triumph of superiority; we are pleased to mark the steps by which we have been raised from rudeness to elegance: and our reflections on this subject are accompanied with a conscious pride, arising in great measure from a tacit comparison of the infinite disproportion between the feeble efforts of remote ages, and our present improvements in knowledge.

In the mean time, the manners, monuments, customs, practices, and opinions of antiquity, by forming so strong a contrast with those of our own times, and by exhibiting human nature and human inventions in new lights, in unexpected appearances, and in various forms, are objects which forcibly strike a feeling imagination.

Nor does this spectacle afford nothing more than a fruitless gratification to the fancy. It teaches us to set a just estimation on our own acquisitions, and encourages us to cherish that cultivation, which is so closely connected with the existence and the exercise of every social virtue.

On these principles, to develop the dawning of genius, and to pursue the progress of our national poetry, from a rude origin and obscure beginnings, to its perfection in a polished age, must prove an interesting and instructive investigation. But a history of poetry, for another reason, yet on the same principles, must be more especially productive of entertainment and utility. I mean, as it is an art, whose object is human society: as it has the peculiar merit, in its operations on that object, of faithfully recording the features of the times, and of preserving the most picturesque and expressive representations

of manners : and because the first monuments of composition in every nation are those of the poet, as it possesses the additional advantage of transmitting to posterity genuine delineations of life in its simplest stages. Let me add, that anecdotes of the rudiments of a favourite art will always be particularly pleasing. The more early specimens of poetry must ever amuse, in proportion to the pleasure which we receive from its finished productions.

Much, however, depends on the execution of such a design,<sup>1</sup> and my readers are to decide in what degree I have done justice to so specious and promising a disquisition. Yet a few more words will not be, perhaps, improper, in vindication, or rather in explanation, of the manner in which my work has been conducted. I am sure I do not mean, nor can I pretend, to apologise for its defects.

I have chosen to exhibit the history of our poetry in a chronological series : not distributing my matter into detached articles, of periodical divisions, or of general heads. Yet I have not always adhered so scrupulously to the regularity of annals, but that I have often deviated into incidental digressions, and have sometimes stopped in the course of my career, for the sake of recapitulation, for the purpose of collecting scattered notices into a single and uniform point of view, for the more exact inspection of a topic which required a separate consideration, or for a comparative survey of the poetry of other nations.

A few years ago, Mr. Mason, with that liberality which ever accompanies true genius, gave me an authentic copy of Mr. Pope's scheme of a *History of English Poetry*, in which our poets were classed under their supposed respective schools. The late lamented Mr. Gray had also projected a work of this kind, and translated some Runic odes for its illustration, now published ; but soon relinquishing the prosecution of a design which would have detained him from his own noble inventions, he most obligingly condescended to favour me with the substance of his plan, which I found to be that of Mr. Pope,<sup>2</sup> considerably enlarged, extended, and improved.

It is vanity in me to have mentioned these communications. But I am apprehensive my vanity will justly be thought much greater,

<sup>1</sup> [Ritson has observed that “ *The History of English Poetry* stands high in public estimation ; that the subject is equally curious, interesting, and abstruse ; and that he should have experienced satisfaction in finding the work *entirely free from error*.” Obs. p. 2. This was penned, alas ! with a selfish disregard to that urbane moral maxim *humanum est errare* : since it may be considered as one of the highest testimonies to the merits of Mr. Warton's elaborate and multifarious publication, that Ritson himself, in his lynx-eyed scrutiny, has detected little more than what a liberal and candid mind would have communicated to the historian as a mere table of *errata*. —PARK.]

<sup>2</sup> [See Pope's plan for a *History of English Poetry*, with another formed upon it by Gray, together with a letter to Warton in the *Gent. Mag.* for 1783. Mr. Malone, in vol. iii. of Dryden's *Prose Works*, pointed out several mistakes in the classification of our English poets by Pope ; and Dr. Warton made a new arrangement of them into four different classes and degrees, because he thought we do not sufficiently attend to the difference between a man of wit, a man of sense, and a true poet. *Ded. to Essay on Pope.* —PARK.]

when it shall appear, that in giving the history of English poetry, I have rejected the ideas of men who are its most distinguished ornaments. To confess the real truth, upon examination and experiment, I soon discovered their mode of treating my subject, plausible as it is, and brilliant in theory, to be attended with difficulties and inconveniences, and productive of embarrassment both to the reader and the writer. Like other ingenious systems, it sacrificed much useful intelligence to the observance of arrangement; and in the place of that satisfaction which results from a clearness and a fulness of information, seemed only to substitute the merit of disposition and the praise of contrivance. The constraint imposed by a mechanical attention to this distribution appeared to me to destroy that free exertion of research with which such a history ought to be executed, and not easily reconcileable with that complication, variety, and extent of materials which it ought to comprehend.

The method I have pursued, on one account at least, seems preferable to all others. My performance, in its present form, exhibits without transposition the gradual improvements of our poetry, at the same time that it uniformly represents the progression of our language.

Some, perhaps, will be of opinion, that these annals ought to have commenced with a view of the Saxon poetry. But besides that a legitimate illustration of that jejune and intricate subject<sup>1</sup> would have almost doubled my labour, that the Saxon language is familiar only to a few learned antiquaries, that our Saxon poems are for the most part little more than religious rhapsodies, and that scarce any compositions remain marked with the native images of that people in their pagan state,<sup>2</sup> every reader that reflects but for a moment on our political establishment must perceive, that the Saxon poetry has no connection with the nature and purpose of my present undertaking. Before the Norman accession, which succeeded to the Saxon government, we were an unformed and unsettled race. That mighty revolution obliterated almost all relation to the former inhabitants of this island; and produced that signal change in our policy, constitution, and public manners, the effects of which have reached modern times. The

<sup>1</sup> [This subject has since been very ably and learnedly illustrated by the pen of Mr. Sharon Turner, in his *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, to which the antiquarian reader is referred.—*Park*. Mr. Wright is of opinion that Mr. Turner's merits have been over-rated. Several other works, illustrative of this subject, have been added to our literature since Warton's time.]

<sup>2</sup> [To evince the unhappy tendency of Ritson's criticisms on Mr. Warton's History, the following comment upon this passage may serve as a sufficient sample. "It may seem (says the critic) a very extraordinary idea in a Christian minister (and who is not only the historian of poets but a poet himself) that these people could not have a poetical genius, because they were not pagans; and that religion and poetry are incompatible." How pitiable was the temper which dictated this forced inference; and what a "picture in little" does it exhibit of morbid spleen!! Indeed, the critic seems totally to misapprehend the drift of Mr. Warton's reasoning: who only infers that when the Saxons were converted to Christianity, they lost all the wild imagery of their old superstitions, and composed religious rhapsodies in lieu of their native barbaric songs.—See *Gent. Mag.* Nov. 1782, p. 522.—*Park*.]

beginning of these annals seems therefore to be most properly dated from that era, when our national character began to dawn.

It was recommended to me by a person eminent in the republic of letters, totally to exclude from these volumes any mention of the English drama. I am very sensible that a just history of our stage is alone sufficient to form an entire and extensive work; and this argument, which is by no means precluded by the attempt here offered to the public, still remains separately to be discussed at large and in form. But as it was professedly my intention to comprise every species of English poetry, this, among the rest, of course claimed a place in these annals, and necessarily fell into my general design. At the same time, as in this situation it could only become a subordinate object, it was impossible I should examine it with that critical precision and particularity which so large, so curious, and so important an article of our poetical literature demands and deserves. To have considered it in its full extent, would have produced the unwieldy excrescence of a disproportionate episode: not to have considered it at all had been an omission, which must detract from the integrity of my intended plan. I flatter myself, however, that from evidences hitherto unexplored I have recovered hints which may facilitate the labours of those who shall hereafter be inclined to investigate the ancient state of dramatic exhibition in this country with due comprehension and accuracy.

It will probably be remarked, that the citations in the first volume are numerous, and sometimes very prolix. But it should be remembered, that most of these are extracted from ancient manuscript poems never before printed, and hitherto but little known. Nor was it easy to illustrate the darker and more distant periods of our poetry, without producing ample specimens. In the meantime, I hope to merit the thanks of the antiquarian, for enriching the stock of our early literature by these new accessions: and I trust I shall gratify the reader of taste, in having so frequently rescued from oblivion the rude inventions and irregular beauties of the heroic tale or the romantic legend.

The design of the Dissertations is to prepare the reader by considering apart, in a connected and comprehensive detail, some material points of a general and preliminary nature, and which could not either with equal propriety or convenience be introduced, at least not so formally discussed, in the body of the book; to establish certain fundamental principles to which frequent appeals might occasionally be made, and to clear the way for various observations arising in the course of my future inquiries.



## Mr. Price's Preface.<sup>1</sup>

**T**HE HISTORY OF ENGLISH POETRY assumes the first place in the catalogue of Warton's prose writings, and, to use the language of his biographer, “forms the most solid basis of his reputation.” Though not the only labour of his life which embraces the study of early English poetry and antiquities, it is still the only one to which he devoted himself with the ardour inspired by a favourite occupation, or in which the nature of his subject allowed him a fair and appropriate field for the display of his genius, his erudition, and his taste. His other productions are either testimonials of what he felt due to his rank in his college, or the amusements in which an active mind indulges when relaxing from severer pursuits; and even much of his poetry contains but a varied disposition of the same imagery which enlivens the pages of his history. In this his most voluminous and most important work, he found a subject commanding all the resources of his richly stored and fertile mind; a task which had excited the attention of two distinguished poets,<sup>2</sup> as an undertaking not unworthy of their talents; where the duties were arduous, the path untrodden, and not a little of public prejudice to subdue against the worth and utility of his object.<sup>3</sup> But Warton was too much in love with his theme, and too confident in his own ability, to be dismayed by difficulties which industry might overcome, or opinions having no better foundation than vulgar belief unsupported by knowledge; and the success attendant upon the publication of his first volume, which speedily reached a second

[<sup>1</sup> This preface is also attached to the edit. of 1840 without any palpable improvements or changes.]

<sup>2</sup> The reader will find Pope's plan of his projected history, enlarged by Gray, in Mant's [and Chalmers's Lives] of Warton. The reasons for differing from his predecessors are given by Warton in the preface to his first volume.

<sup>3</sup> Pope's sneers against “all such reading as was never read,” and “the classics of an age that heard of none,” were still fresh in public recollection.

edition,<sup>1</sup> encouraged him to persevere in his course. A second and a third volume appeared in due succession; a small portion of the fourth had been committed to the press, when death arrested his hand, just as he was entering on the most interesting and brilliant period of our poetic annals—the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

The comprehensive plan upon which Warton had commenced this work so far exceeded his expectations of its possible extent, that though the original design was to have been completed in two volumes, there was still as much to do as had been accomplished when his labours were thus abruptly terminated. Of this plan it had been a leading principle that the historian was not to confine himself to the strict letter of his subject—a chronological account of poets and their writings, with an estimate of their merits or defects. The range of inquiry was to be extended further, beyond its obvious or perhaps its lawful limits; and the *History of English Poetry* to be made a channel for conveying information on the state of manners and customs among our feudal ancestry, the literature and arts of England, and occasionally of Europe at large. A life longer than Warton's might have been unequal to the execution of such an extensive project; and there will be as many opinions upon the necessity of thus enlarging the boundaries of his theme, as of the manner in which he has acquitted himself in the undertaking. For while the general reader will complain of the frequent calls upon his patience for these repeated digressions, the scholar will regret that subjects so attractive and copious in themselves are only passingly or superficially treated of. Without attempting to justify or deny the force of these objections, it may be more to our present purpose to inquire what may have been the author's views of his duty, and the manner in which this was to be accomplished. In common with every one else who has duly canvassed the subject, Warton indisputably felt that the poetry of a rude and earlier age, with very few exceptions, can only command a share of later attention in proportion as it has exercised an influence over the times producing it, or conveys a picture of the institutions, modes of thinking, or general habits of the society for which it was written. To have given specimens of these productions in all their native nakedness would have been to ensure for them neglect from the listless student, and misapprehension from the more zealous but uninformed inquirer. A commentary was indispensably necessary, not a mere gloss upon words, but things, a luminous exposition of whatever had changed its character or grown obsolete in the lapse of time, and which, as it unfolded to the reader's view the forgotten customs of the day, assisted him to live and feel in the spirit of the poet's age. For such a purpose it was requisite to enter largely into the domestic and civil economy of our ancestors, their public and private sports, the entertainments of the baronial hall, the martial exercises of the tournament, the alternate solemnities and

---

<sup>1</sup> This second edition is not a mere reprint of the title-page; it is marked by several typographical errors which do not occur in the first.

buffooneries of misdirected devotion, and those coarser pastimes and amusements which relieve the toil of industry, and give a zest to the labours of the humbler classes. The spirit and gallant enterprise of chivalry was to be recorded in conjunction with the juggler's dexterity and the necromancer's art; the avocations of the cloisters, the *wode-craft*<sup>1</sup> of the feudal lord, and the services of his retainer, were each to receive a share of the general notice; and though romance and minstrelsy might be the prominent characteristics of the age, the occult mysteries of alchemy were not to be overlooked. With these were to be ranged the popular superstitions of a departed pagan faith and the legendary marvels of a new religion; the relations of the citizen to the state and of the ecclesiastic to the community; the effects produced by the important political events of five centuries, and their consequences on the progress of civilization and national literature. In addition to these varied topics, Warton considered it equally imperative upon him to account for the striking contrast existing between the poetry of the ancient and modern world; and, in developing what he has termed the origin of romantic fiction, to discuss the causes which embellished or corrupted it, and to explain those anomalies which appear to separate it both from more recent compositions and the classic remains of antiquity. He also knew that, though poetry be not the child of learning, it is modified in every age by the current knowledge of the country, and that as an imitative art, it is always either borrowing from the imagery of existing models, or wrestling with the excellencies which distinguish them. It was therefore not only necessary to investigate the degree of classic lore which still diffused its light amid the gloom of the earlier ages of barbarism, but to show the disguises and corruptions under which a still greater portion had recommended itself to popular notice, and courted attention as the memorials of ancient and occasionally of national enterprise. But the middle age had also produced a learning of its own, and the scholar and the poet were so frequently united in the same personage, that in this ill-affected match of science "wedded to immortal verse," the muse was often made the mere domestic drudge of her abstruse and erudite consort. Of this once highly-valued knowledge, so little has descended to our own times, that the modern reader, without a guide to instruct him in his progress, feels like the traveller before the walls of Persepolis, who gazes on the inscriptions of a powerful but extinguished race, without a key to the character recording their deeds. Above all, it was of importance to notice the successive acquisitions, in the shape of translation or imitation, from the more polished productions of Greece and Rome; and to mark the dawn of that æra which, by directing the human mind to the study of classical antiquity, was to give a new impetus to science and literature, and by the changes it introduced to effect a total revolution in the laws which had previously governed them. This is clearly the

[<sup>1</sup> What is *wode-craft*?—WRIGHT.]

outline of what Warton proposed to himself as his duty: of the mode in which this design has been fulfilled it must be left to others to determine. But let it not be hastily inferred that, when he has been excursive upon some collateral topic, he has consequently given it an importance disproportionate to its real bearing on his subject; or that the languor produced upon the reader's mind, in certain periods of these annals, is exclusively the author's fault. The results attendant upon literary, as well as moral or political, changes are not always distinguished by that manifest equality to their exciting cause, which strikes the sense on a first recital; and the poetry of so many centuries, like the temper of the times or the constitution of the seasons, must necessarily exhibit the same fitful vicissitudes of character, the same alternations of fertility and unproductiveness. Of the materials transmitted to his hands, whether marked by excellence or proverbial for insipidity, it is still the historian's duty to record the existence; and though many of these may contain no single ray of genius to redeem their numerous absurdities, they yet may throw considerable light on the state of public opinion and the ruling tastes or customs of their age. The most popular poetry of its day is well known not always to be the most meritorious, however safely we may trust to the equity of time for repairing this injustice. The only question therefore will be, as to the degree in which such compositions ought to be communicated. In the earlier periods, where any memorials are exceedingly scanty, and those generally varying in their prevailing character, a greater latitude will be granted than in those where the invention of printing equally contributed to multiply the materials, and render the documents more generally accessible. Of Warton's consideration in this respect, it will be sufficient to remark, that in the sixteenth century (when every man seems to have been visited with a call to court the muse, and had an opportunity of giving publicity to his conceptions) he has frequently consigned a herd of spiritless versifiers to the "narrow durance" of a note. There is another point upon which it may be more difficult to rescue his fame at the bar of outraged criticism: but as this seems to have been a crime of malice prepense, rather than inadvertency, his name must be left to sanctify the deed. The want of order in the arrangement of his subject is a charge which has been repeated both by friends and foes. A part of this Warton seems to have intentionally adopted. In a letter to Gray, tracing the outline of his forthcoming history, he specifically states: "I should have said before, that although I proceed chronologically, yet I often stand still to give some general view, as perhaps of a *particular species of poetry, &c.*, and even to *anticipate* sometimes for this purpose. These views often form one section; yet are interwoven into the tenor of the work without interrupting my historical series."<sup>1</sup> He possibly thought, that as it is of the essence of romantic poetry "to delight in an intimate commingling of extremes, in the blending and con-

<sup>1</sup> See Chalmers' *Biog. Diet. art. WARTON.*

trasting of the most opposing elements,"<sup>1</sup> it was equally so of its historian to deviate from established rules, and may have been so smitten with his ancient masters as to conceive some of their distinguishing characteristics not unworthy of occasional imitation. But when it is said that his materials are ill digested, that we are frequently called upon in a later century to travel back to one preceding, that we are then treated with specimens which *ought* to have found a place in an earlier chapter,<sup>2</sup> the zeal of criticism is made to exceed the limits either of justice or candour. It is wholly overlooked that Warton was the first adventurer in the extensive region through which he journeyed, and into which the usual pioneers of literature had scarcely penetrated. Beyond his own persevering industry, he had little to assist his researches; his materials lay widely scattered, and not always very accessible; new matter was constantly arising, as chance or the spirit of inquiry evolved the contents of our public libraries,<sup>3</sup> and he had the double duty to perform of discovering his subject and writing its history.

But these objections, whether founded in error or justified by facts, have all been urged with temper, and are distinguished by that consideration for Warton's personal character which every gentleman is entitled to, and every liberal scholar prides himself upon observing. In those now to be noticed, a widely different spirit was manifested; and one so opposite to every principle of decent or manly feeling, that it might be safely left to the contempt which Warton in the proud conviction of his own honour and integrity bestowed upon it, were it not interwoven with matter requiring attention on other accounts, of which occasional notice has been taken in the body of the work, and which must again be the subject of discussion. The reader of early English poetry will be at no loss to perceive, that the objections and conduct here spoken of are those of the late Mr. Ritson. To be zealous in detecting error, exposing folly, or checking the presumptuous arrogance of any literary despot, is an obligation which the commonwealth of learning imposes upon all her sons. The tone of the reproof, and the character of the offence, are all that will be demanded of the ministrant in his office; and so great is the latitude allowed, that he who will condescend "to break a butterfly upon a wheel," *secundum artem*, runs no greater risk than a gentle censure for the eccentricity of his taste; and even acrimony, where

<sup>1</sup> Schlegel's *Lectures on Dram. Liter.* vol iii. p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> See *Monthly Review* for 1793.—Dr. Mant, who has refuted some of these charges, states them to have been copied (without acknowledgment) by Dr. Anderson, in his *Life of Warton*. May we not rather infer that Dr. Anderson felt no obligation to acknowledge a quotation from himself?

<sup>3</sup> The poems of Minot could only have been known to Warton by report when he published his first volume. It is well known that they were accidentally discovered by Mr. Tyrwhitt while engaged in searching for MSS. of Chaucer. A similar accident led to the discovery of the alliterative romance on the adventures of Sir Gawain, quoted by the writer of this note, and which, there is every reason to believe, must have passed through the hands of Mr. Ritson.

great provocation has been given, may pass for just and honest indignation. But Mr. Ritson, in the execution of his censorial duty, indulged in a vein of low scurrility and gross personalities, wholly without example since the days of Curll. He not only combated Warton's opinions and corrected his errors, questioned his scholarship, and denied his ability, but impugned his veracity, attacked his morality, and openly accused him of all those mean and despicable arts, by which a needy scribbler attempts to rifle the public purse. There would have been little in this beyond the common operation of a nine days' wonder, and the ferment of the hour which every deviation from established practice is sure to excite, had the charges been limited to a single publication. But for a period of twenty years, both while the object of them was living, and after his decease, they were repeated in every variety of form, always from the same amiable motives, though occasionally in a subdued style of animosity. The result of this extraordinary course was the establishment of Mr. Ritson as the critical lord paramount in the realms of romance and minstrelsy; his fiat became the ruling law, and no audacious hand was to raise the veil which covered the infirmities of the suzerain. For though he has magnified those venial errors which, as the human mind is constituted, are almost inseparable from such an undertaking as Warton's, into offences which only meet their parallel in the criminal nomenclature of the country—into fraud, imposture and forgery: yet his own labours in the same department of literature, his *Ancient Songs and Metrical Romances*, though scarcely equaling a tithe of the *History of English poetry*, are marked by the same kinds of inaccuracy as those he has so coarsely branded. Indeed, on such a subject it would have been as marvellous as unaccountable, if they had not: but this is foreign to our purpose. It will rather be asked, whether the historian of English poetry may not have provoked this treatment by his own intemperance of rebuke or want of charity towards others; and whether the vehemence of Mr. Ritson's indignation and the virulence of his invective may not have had a more commensurate motive than the misquotation of a date, a name, or a text, or the fallacy of a mere speculative opinion. With the exception of one misdemeanour hereafter to be mentioned,—a sin in itself of pardonable levity, if it must be so stigmatized,—Warton's conduct towards his fellow-labourers in the mine of antiquarian research was distinguished by a tone of courtesy and complimentary address, which the sterner principles of the present day have rejected as bordering too closely upon adulation. Of this, therefore, as a general charge he must be acquitted, and equally so of any intention to wound the feelings or undermine the reputation of Mr. Ritson, as that gentleman's first publication connected with early English literature,<sup>1</sup> was his *Observa-*

<sup>1</sup> [But Ritson, between 1784 and 1793, printed five collections of local ditties, namely, *The Bishoprick Garland*, Stockton, 1784, 12mo. *Gammer Gurton's Garland*, Stockton, circa 1784, 12mo. *The Yorkshire Garland*, part I. (all published), York,

tions on Warton's history.<sup>1</sup> The causes of this extraordinary persecution must hence be sought for in other directions. Among these it is not difficult to detect the sullen rancour of a jealous and self-appointed rival, the workings of an inferior mind, aiming at notoriety by an insolent triumph over talents which it at once envies and despairs of equaling. The "taste and elegance" with which Warton had embellished his narrative, became a source of chagrin to a man who sought distinction by a style of orthography, resembling anything but the language of his native country; and hence the sarcastic tone in which these graceful advantages are complimented, while they are carefully contrasted with the historian's "habitual blunders." Warton's learning was also of no common order; and his reading of that extensive kind which enabled him to illustrate his theme from the varied circle of ancient and modern literature; and here again it

1788, 12mo. *The Northumberland Garland*, Newcastle, 1793, 12mo. *The North-Country Chorister*, Durham, 1792, 12mo. These were all reprinted in 1810]. The *Observations* produced a controversy in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1782-83. The first letter on the subject, signed Verax, was in all probability written by Warton. (See his Letter to Mr. Nichols of the same date, inclosing a communication to that *Miscellany* and requesting a concealment of the writer's name.) (Those signed A. S. were by the late Mr. Russell of Sydney College. The letter signed Vindex contains internal evidence of Mr. Ritson's hand, who may also have drawn up the epitome of his pamphlet (1783, p. 281). But who was Castigator? (1782, p. 571). Was it the same worthy personage of whom his friend records the following creditable transaction? "This venerabilissimus episcopus [the Bishop of Dromore], upon a different occasion, gave Mister Steevens a transcript from the above [folio] MS. of the vulgar ballad of *Old Simon the King*, with a strict injunction not to show it to this editour [Mr. Ritson,] which however he immediately brought him!" Yet these were honourable men!

<sup>1</sup> In this extraordinary pamphlet, Mr. Ritson made thirty-eight remarks upon the multifarious matter contained in Warton's first volume. Nine of these consist of those personalities already spoken of, or are mere objections to the conduct and order of the work. Thirteen are devoted to glossarial corrections, among which are the candid specimen recorded *infra* and two literal interpretations, instead of two very appropriate paraphrases. The remaining fifteen, or rather the subjects they refer to, it may be worth while to analyse. One of these had been already corrected by Warton in the *Emendations* appended to the second volume—a circumstance which Mr. Ritson either knew, or ought to have known, as he carefully picked his way through this additional matter, for the purpose of supplying two corrections, one of which he afterwards recalled, and in furnishing the other committed an error equally great with that he amended. A second comprises the very "egregious blunder" of calling a piece of political rhyme a "ballad," when it is not written in "your ballad-metre." In a third, Warton has chosen to make a direct inference, where the affair admits neither of absolute proof nor disproof. And a fourth offers an opinion, but a mere and guarded opinion, as to the age of a poem, in which there is every reason to believe he was correct. In seven examples, it may be allowed that Mr. Ritson has convicted the historian of "ignorance;" though two of these refer to matters that are rather probable than certain: but in four of the remaining five, he has offered objections or corrections on subjects, where the charges of error only rebound upon himself. The fifteenth refers to a subject where Warton candidly acknowledges his inability to gratify the reader's curiosity. Thus, with the exception of the glossarial inaccuracies, of which more will be said hereafter, Mr. Ritson can only be admitted to have corrected *seven* mistakes, or more rigidly speaking *five*, in a 4to volume of 468 pages, and in the execution of which he has himself become chargeable with *four*.

became matter of exultation to discover, that his knowledge of Italian had once been but limited, or to hint that his acquaintance with Hickes's *Thesaurus* had been assisted by a translation of Wotton's *Conspicetus*. But in the gaiety of his heart, Warton had smiled at the solemn dulness of Hearne, the idol of Mr. Ritson's affections; he had descanted on the laboured triflings of this diligent antiquary in a style of successful yet playful irony, and chose to entertain no very exalted opinion of the patient drudgery by which "Thomas" was to recommend himself to posterity. This was an unpardonable offence, and little short of a declaration of hostilities by anticipation. For though genius will approve the well-directed satire which exposes its own peculiar foibles, while portraying the follies of a contemporary, yet moody mediocrity never forgives the bolt which, aimed at another's eccentricities, inadvertently grazes its own inviolable person. In addition, the historian of English poetry was a Christian, a churchman, and a distinguished member of his college; all and either of them [circumstances] sufficient to condemn him in the eyes of a man whose creed was confined to a rigid abstinence from animal food; with whom a clergyman was but another name for a "lazy, stinking and ignorant monk;" and who seems never to have been better pleased than when retailing the coarse and pointless ribaldry of the fifteenth century against the honours and dignities of an University. To this full measure of indiscretion Warton had superadded a warm admiration of the powers and learning of Warburton, and had even adopted, and considerably amplified, the fanciful theory of this eminent prelate on the origin of romantic fiction. This again was siding with the enemy. The Bishop of Gloucester had conducted a merciless persecution against a sect of which Mr. Ritson made no scruple to acknowledge himself a follower, the "Epicureorum factio, æquo semper errore a vero devia et illa existimans ridenda quæ nesciat,"<sup>1</sup> and unhappily for his fame and the cause he advocated, in the possession of a giant's strength, had too frequently exercised it with the cruelty of a giant. The tyranny of the master was therefore to be avenged on the head of his otherwise too guilty pupil; and the double end to be gained, of inflicting an insidious wound upon a foe too powerful to be encountered in the open field,<sup>2</sup> and crushing an unresisting

<sup>1</sup> *Macrobius, Som. Scipionis*, in init.

<sup>2</sup> It is ludicrous in the extreme to observe a man of Mr. Ritson's attainments, stating Warburton's "distinguishing characteristic" to be "a want of knowledge." The "habitual mendacity" of the same learned prelate finds its parallel, if mere errors of opinion must receive this bland distinction in such hasty assertions as the following: "The real *chanson de Roland* was unquestionably a metrical romance of great length." *Introd. to Met. Rom.* p. 37. "The Armoricans never possessed a single story on the subject of Arthur and the Round Table." *Ib. p. 46.* "The poets of Provence borrowed their art from the French or Normans." *Ib. p. 50.* "There is but one single romance existing that can be attributed to a troubadour," *p. 51.* "Before the first crusade, or for more than half a century after it, there was not one single romance on the achievements of Arthur or his knights." *Ib. p. 52.* To enumerate all the unfounded assertions contained in the section immediately following "The Saxon and English language" would be to write a small treatise.

and applauded rival. But enough of this revolting subject, of which justice to the memory of an amiable, unoffending, and elegant scholar required that some notice should be taken, and which no language can be too strong to mark with deserved reprobation.

It is now time to turn to those objections of Mr. Ritson which embrace the literary defects of the *History of English Poetry*.

There can be no intention of dragging the reader through the minute and tedious details with which this branch of the controversy is burthened. Wherever the better information of Mr. Ritson has been available (at least in all cases where his reasoning has produced conviction on the editor's mind), his corrections will be found submitted in their appropriate places. But as the more important of these were directed against opinions rather than facts, and consequently, whether correct or inadmissible, could not always be inserted or combated in the body of the work, without deranging Warton's text or causing too frequent repetitions, they have been reserved for consideration here, and may be classed under the general heads of:—objections to the *Dissertation on the Origin of Romantic Fiction*, the credibility of Geoffrey of Monmouth's history, the character of Warton's specimens, and his glossarial illustrations of them.

If the object of this examination were a mere defence of Warton's opinions, by exposing the false positions assumed by his adversary, it would be an easy task to show that Mr. Ritson's sweeping assertions with regard to the general relations between the Moors in Spain and their conquered subjects, or even their Christian foes, are not borne out by the facts. The inferences he has drawn would consequently fall of themselves; and it might be added, that the discoveries of our own times have sufficiently proved the possibility of this decried system being upheld, if the general principle it assumes, and which has been applied by Mr. Ritson to the progress of Romance in England, Italy, and Germany, were otherwise allowable. The romance of *Antar* might be offered as a sufficient type for all subsequent tales of chivalry; and the story of the *Sid Batallah* adduced as a proof, that the Spaniards could endow a national hero with a title borrowed from the favourite champion of their foes.<sup>1</sup> But this would be creating a phantom for the purpose of foiling an overzealous adversary. The ends of truth will be better advanced by examining the causes which led to Warton's adoption of this dazzling theory, and an estimate of its application to the subject it was intended to develop.

The light sketch given by Warburton of the origin of romance in

<sup>1</sup> Of course this is only stated hypothetically. The reason assigned in the Chronicle for the appellation is indubitably a fable; since every tributary Moor would have used the same address, *Sid* (*Master*) to his Spanish liege lord. The Arabian romance is noticed by Warton, *Diss.* i.; and Mr. von Hammer has borne evidence to its great popularity among the Saracens. The Moorish *Sid* died in the campaign against Constantinople, anno 738. See *Jahrbücher der Literatur*, No. 14. The German romances on the story of the *Saint Graal* (to be noticed hereafter) are derived from an Arabic source, through the medium of the Provençal.

Spain traced the whole stream of chivalrous fiction to two sources,—the chronicle of the Pseudo-Turpin relative to Charlemagne and his peers, and the British history of Geoffrey of Monmouth. In this system there were many points totally irreconcileable with the state of the subject, both before and after the periods at which these productions obtained a circulation; and it was therefore necessary to account for what might be termed the anticipations of their narratives, and even their omissions, by the discovery of a more prolific fountain-head. A large portion of the marvellous imagery contained in the early poetry of Europe was found to have its counterpart in the creations of Oriental genius. To account for this, by a direct communication between the East and West, was the problem that Warton proposed to solve; and as the æra of the first crusade was too recent to meet the difficulties already alluded to, and Warburton had been supposed to prove that the first romances were of Spanish origin, the subject seemed to connect itself in a very natural order with the Moorish conquest of that country. A more extensive acquaintance with the general literature of the dark and middle ages has fully proved the fallacy of this assumption, which could only have been entertained in the infancy of the study. But that such an hypothesis should have been conceived in this stage of the subject, will be no impeachment of Warton's general judgment, when it is recollectcd that his contemporary Dr. Percy had adopted a system equally exclusive; and that Dr. Leyden, at a later period, advocated a third upon the same contracted principles. The analogous conduct of such men, though not wholly exculpatory, is at least a proof that the causes for this procedure rested on no slight foundation. There is, however, one leading error in Warton's *Dissertation*, an error it only shares in common with the theories opposed to it, arising from too confined a view of the natural limits of his subject and too general an application of the system in detail. The consequence has been an unavoidable confusion between the essence and the costume of romantic fiction, and the exclusive appropriation of the common property of mankind to a particular age and people. Indeed, the learned projectors of these several systems no sooner begin to disclose the details of their schemes, than we instantly recognise the elements of national fable in every country of whose literature we possess a knowledge; and notwithstanding the professed intention of conducting an examination into the origin of romantic fiction, their disquisitions silently merge into the origin of fiction in general. To such an inquiry it is evident there can be no chronological limits. The fictions of one period, with some modification, are found to have had an existence in that immediately preceding; and the further we pursue the investigation, the more we become convinced of a regular transmission through the succession of time, or that many seeming resemblances and imitations are sprung from common organic causes, till at length the question escapes us as a matter of historical research, and resolves itself into one purely psychological. It is even difficult to conceive any period of human

existence where the disposition to indulge in these illusions of fancy has not been a leading characteristic of the mind. The infancy of society, as the first in the order of time, also affords some circumstances highly favourable to the development of this faculty. In such a state the secret and invisible bands which connect the human race with the animal and vegetable creation are either felt more forcibly than in an age of conventional refinement, or are more frequently presented to the imagination. Man regards himself then but as the first link in the chain of animate and inanimate nature, as the associate and fellow of all that exists around him, rather than as a separate being of a distinct and superior order. His attention is arrested by the lifeless or breathing objects of his daily intercourse, not merely as they contribute to his numerous wants and pleasures, but as they exhibit any affinity or more remote analogy with the mysterious properties of his being. Subject to the same laws of life and death, of procreation and decay, or partially endowed with the same passions, sympathies and propensities, the speechless companion of his toil and amusement, the forest in which he resides, or the plant which flourishes beneath his care, are to him but varied types of his own intricate organization. In the exterior form of these, the faithful record of his senses forbids any material change; but the internal structure, which is wholly removed from the view, may be fashioned and constituted at pleasure. The qualities which this is to assume need only be defined by the measure of the will, and hence we see that, not content with granting to each separate class a mere generic vitality suitable to its kind, he bestows on all the same mingled frame of matter and mind, which gives the chief value to his own existence. Nor is this playful exercise of the inventive faculties confined to the sentient objects of the creation; it is extended over the whole material and immaterial world, and applied to everything of which the mind has either a perfect or only a faint conception. The physical phenomena of nature, the tenets of a public creed, the speculations of ancient wisdom,<sup>1</sup> or the exposition of a moral duty, are alike subjected to the same fantastic impress, and made to assume those forms which, by an approximation to the animal contour, assist the understanding in seizing their peculiar qualities, and the memory in retaining them. It is this personification of the blind efforts of nature which has given rise to those wild and distorted elements that abound in all profane cosmogonies; where, by a singular combination of the awful and sublime with the monstrous and revolting, an attempt is made to render intelligible

<sup>1</sup> See the celebrated passage in the *Iliad*, viii. 17, relative to the golden chain of Jupiter, with Heyne's account of the interpretations bestowed upon it in the ancient world. Mr. F. Schlegel has given a parallel passage from the *Bhagavat-gita*, where Vishnu illustrates the extent of his power by a similar image: "I am the cause of existence as well as destruction to all; than me nothing higher is found, and nothing without me. O friend! this ALL hangs united on me like the pearls that are strung on a fillet." *Ueber die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier*, p. 303. See also *Il. i.* 422, with the ancient expositors.

those infinite energies of matter which surpass the limits of human comprehension. The same law is evident in the obscure embodiment of a moral axiom, or an abstract quality, as shadowed forth in the enigma;<sup>1</sup> in all that condensed imagery which has found its way into the proverbial expressions of nations; and some of the most surprising incidents in romantic narrative have no better foundation than the conversion of a name into an event.<sup>2</sup> But of this universal tendency to confer a spiritual existence upon the lifeless productions of nature, and to give a corporeal form and expression to the properties and conceptions of matter and mind, it would be superfluous to offer any laboured proof. The whole religious system of the ancient world, with one exception, may be adduced as an exemplification of the fact; and even the sacred writings of the Old Testament contain occasional indications of a similar practice.<sup>3</sup>

The operation of this principle, while it is sufficient to account for all the marvels of popular fiction, will also lead to the establishment of two conclusions: first, that wherever there may have been any resemblance in the objects calling it forth, the imagery produced will exhibit a corresponding similarity of character; and secondly, that a large proportion of the symbols thus brought into circulation, like the primitive roots in language, will be found recurring in almost every country, as a common property inherited by descent. In illustration of these conclusions, we need only refer to those local traditions of distant countries which profess to record the history of some unusual appearance on the surface of the soil,<sup>4</sup> the peculiar character

<sup>1</sup> Considerable collections on this subject are to be found in the preface to Re-senius's edition of the Edda. The whole argument is very elaborately discussed in Mr. Creuzer's learned work, *Symbolik und Mythologie der Alten Volker besonders der Griechen*, vol. i. Leipzig, 1810.

<sup>2</sup> The name of Cœur de Lion has furnished King Richard's romance with the well-known incident of his combat with a lion. A still more remarkable illustration of the same practice is to be found in the German romance, Heinrich der Lowe, or Henry the Lion. See Görres's *Volks-bücher*, p. 91. There can be as little doubt that we are indebted to the name of Cypelus (a cheif) for the marvellous story related by Herodotus, 5, 92. See also the fable relative to Priam (from πρίαμος, Apollodorus, *Biblioth.* ii. 6, 4,) and Ajax (from αἴας, *Shol. in Pind. Ith.* c<sup>1</sup>, 76). To the same cause, perhaps, we may also attribute the tale of Pelops and his ivory shoulder. The concurrent practice of the minstrel poets will show these recitals not to have been mere fancies of the grammarians.

<sup>3</sup> See the fable of the trees, Judges ix. 8; of the thistle and the cedar, 2 Chronicles xxv. 18.

<sup>4</sup> At the entrance of a cave near the plain of Marathon, Pausanias saw a number of loose stones, which at a distance resembled goats. The country-people called them Pan's Flock. (*Attica*, 26.) A similar group on Marlborough Down is still called the Gray Wethers. A tuft of cypresses near Psophis, in Arcadia, was called the Virgins. (*Arcad.* c. 24.) On the downs between Wadebridge and St. Columb there is a line of stones called the Nine Maids. Borlase, *Ant. of Corn.* p. 159. The Glastonbury thorn, which budded on Christmas day, was a dry hawthorn staff miraculously planted by St. Joseph. Collinson's *Somersetshire*, ii. p. 265. This is a common miracle in the history of the Dionysic thyrsus. A myrtle at Troezen, whose leaves were full of holes, was said to have been thus perforated by Phædra in her moments of despair. (Paus. i. 22. See also ii. 28 and 32.)

of a vegetable production, or the structure of a public monument. Whether in ancient Greece or modern Europe, every object of this kind that meets the traveller's eye is found to have a chronicle of its origin; the causes assigned for its existence, or its natural and artificial attributes, wear a common mythic garb; while in either country these narratives are so strikingly allied to the fictions of popular song, that it is sometimes difficult to decide whether the muse has supplied their substance, or been herself indebted to them for some of her most attractive incidents.<sup>1</sup> A mound of earth becomes the sepulchre of a favourite hero;<sup>2</sup> a pile of enormous stones, the easy labour of some gigantic craftsman;<sup>3</sup> a single one, the stupendous instrument of daily exercise to a fabulous king;<sup>4</sup> the conformation of a rock, or a mark upon its surface, attests the anger or the presence of some divinity;<sup>5</sup> and the emblems and decorations of a monumental effigy must either be explained from the events of popular history,<sup>6</sup> or perverted from

<sup>1</sup> There can be little doubt that the story of the Phæacian ship (*Od.* xiii. 163) was taken from some local tradition well known at the period. In the time of Procopius it had become localized at the modern Cassopé, notwithstanding an inscription explained the origin of the votive structure to which it was attached. At the present day a small island near the harbour of Corfu claims the honour of being the original bark. In the same way many incidents in the Argonautica received a "local habitation." According to Timonax, Jason and Medea were married at Colchis, where the bridal bed was shown. Timæus denied this, and referred to the nuptial altars at Cercyra. (*Schol. in Apoll. Rhod.* iv. 1217.) The earliest version of this fiction may be supposed to have confirmed the Colchian tradition; but as the limits of the sphere of action became extended, the later narratives of necessity embraced other fables. Hence the Argonautic poems became for ancient geography and local tradition what the syncretic statuary of Cybele were for ancient symbols. The passage in Apollonius, l. i. v. 1305, is evidently taken from a local fiction, as it refers to the *rocking-stones* commemorating the event.

<sup>2</sup> In localizing these traditions little regard is paid to the contending claims of other districts. Several mounds are shown in various parts of Denmark as the graves of Vidrich Verlandsen, and as many of the giant Langbein. (Müller, *Saga Bibliothek*, vol. ii. p. 224.) The residence of Habor and Signe, so celebrated in Danish song, has been appropriated in the same way, and has given name to a variety of places. (*Udvælgte Danske Viser*, vol. iii. p. 403.) Scottish tradition has transferred the burial-place of Thomas the Rhymer from Erceldown to a *tomhan* which rises in a plain near Inverness. Grant's *Essays*, &c. vol. ii. p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> The Cyclopes were the contrivers of these works in ancient times, whose place has been supplied by the Giants. See the books relative to Stonehenge, Giant's Causeway, &c. The Arabs have a tradition that Cleopatra's needle was once surrounded by seven others, which were brought from Mount Berym to Alexandria by seven giants of the tribe of Aad.

<sup>4</sup> The common people call a cromlech, near Lligwy, in Anglesey, Coeten Arthur, or Arthur's Quoit. Jones's *Bardic Mus.* p. 60. The general character of the Homeric poems will justify the conclusion that a similar monument supplied the incident in the *Odyssey*, viii. ver. 194. The Locrians showed an enormous stone before the door of Euthymus, which he was said to have placed there by his own efforts. *Ael. V. Hist.* viii. 18.

<sup>5</sup> At Mount Sipylus, in Attica, there was a rock which at some distance resembled a woman weeping; the inhabitants called it Niobe. (Paus. i. 21.) The footprint of Hercules was seen imprinted on a rock near the River Tyra in Scythia. Herod. iv. 82. In Cicero's time the marks of the horses' hoofs of Castor and Pollux were still shown as a proof of their presence at the battle of Regillus. *De Nat. Deor.* iii. 5, 11, 2.

<sup>6</sup> The statue of Nemesis at Rhamnus gave rise to a Grecian fable, that the stone

their original character to give some passage in it a locality.<sup>1</sup> It is thus too that the volcanic eruptions of Lydia, Sicily, Cilicia and Bœotia were respectively attributed to the agency of Typhon;<sup>2</sup> that the purple tints upon certain flowers were said to have originated with the deaths of Ajax, Adonis and Hyacinthus; that the story of the man in the moon has found a circulation throughout the world; and that the clash of elements in the thunder-storm was ascribed in Hellas to the rolling chariot-wheels of Jove,<sup>3</sup> and in Scandinavia to the ponderous waggon of the Norwegian Thor. The same general principle has likewise led to that community of ideas entertained by all mankind of the glories and felicities of the past. Every age has been delighted to dwell with sentiments of admiration upon the memory of the “good old times;” they still continue to form a theme of fond and lavish applause; and the philosophic Agis had to console his desponding countryman with a remark which every man’s experience has made familiar, “that the fading virtues of later times were a cause of grief to his father Archidamus, who again had listened to the same regrets from his own venerable sire.”<sup>4</sup> In this, indeed, the feelings and conduct of nations in their collective capacity only present us with a counterpart to individual opinion. The sinking energies of increasing age, like the dimness of enfeebled vision, have a constant tendency to deprive passing events of their natural sharpness of outline and the broader features of their character; and we learn to charge them with an indistinctness of form and a sombre tameness of colouring, which only exist in the spectator’s mind. The defects of our own impaired and wanning organs become transferred to the changeless objects around us; and in proportion as the imagination recalls the impressions of earlier life, when the sense enjoyed the robust and healthy action of youth, the present is doomed to suffer by an unjust and degrading contrast. Thus also in the lengthened vista of popular tradition, every thing which is shrouded in the obscurity of a distant age is made to partake of those physical and temporal advantages which the fancy has bestowed upon the reign of Saturn in Hesperia,<sup>5</sup> or the joys of Asgard before the arrival

of which it was made had been brought to Marathon by the Persians, for the purpose of erecting a victorious trophy. (*Paus.* i. 33.) That it was a mere fable, every practice of their enemies clearly proves.

<sup>1</sup> See the account of Sir John Conyers’ tomb in Gough’s *Camden*, iii. p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> *Schol. in Lycoph.* v. 177.

<sup>3</sup> Hesychius in v. *αχειβερτα*.

<sup>4</sup> Plutarch, *Apophtheg. Lacon.* 17.

<sup>5</sup> See Diod. Sic. iii. 61. Compare also Hesiod’s account of the golden age. *Op. et Dies.* v. 108, &c. The comic side of the picture is to be found in Ath[en]n. l. vi. p. 267, &c. But the ancients always had some distant country, where these fancied blessings were still enjoyed. In the earlier periods, *Æthiopia* seems to have been the name ascribed to this land of promise (*Il.* i. 423, *Od.* i. 22); and hence perhaps the flattering, though somewhat sobered, picture of its inhabitants given by Herodotus, iii. c. 17-24. Later traditions place the scene in the country of the Hyperboreans, a people changing their locality from the northern extremity of Asia to that of Europe, or even the coast of Gaul (compare Diod. Sic. 2 c. 47 with Pomponius Mela, 3, c. 5), and to whom Strabo, on the authority of Simonides and Pindar, has given a life of a thousand years, lib. xv. p. 711. Another chain of

of the gigantic visitants from Jotunheim.<sup>1</sup> The qualities of the mind and the properties of the body are then supposed to share in the native vigour of a young creation; and those cherished objects of man's early wishes, extreme longevity and great corporeal strength are believed to be the enviable lot of all.<sup>2</sup> Hence the fictions of every country have agreed in regarding an unusual extension of the thread of life as a mark of divine favour;<sup>3</sup> and every national hero has been endowed with gigantic stature,<sup>4</sup> and made to possess all those virtues which the common consent of mankind unites in con-

dition assigns it to the isles of the West (*Od.* iv. 563), and from hence have sprung the descriptions of Horace (*Epop.* xvi. 41), and Plutarch (in *Vit. Sertor.*). For similar accounts of India, see Ctesias *ap.* Wesseling's *Herod.* p. 861, and Pliny, vii. 2.

<sup>1</sup> *Edda of Snorro Dæmefaga*, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Josephus, after noticing the age of Noah, cites the testimonies of Manetho for the extreme longevity of the early Egyptians; of Hieronymus for that of the Phoenicians; of Hesiod, Hecatæus, &c., for the Grecians; all of whom gave a thousand years to the life of man in the first periods of the world. *Archæolog.* i. c. 3, § 9. For the same advantage enjoyed by the early Egyptian kings, see Diod. Sic. i. 26, and compare Pliny's account of the Arcadians and Ætolians, some of whom lived three hundred years. *Hist. Nat.* vii. 48. The long-lived Æthiopians of Herodotus, who, be it remembered, were the tallest and most beautiful of mankind, usually lived 120 years. *Herod.* iii. c. 17, 23.

<sup>3</sup> At the siege of Troy the "Pylian lage" was living his third age. *Il.* i. 250. A Lycian tradition had assigned to Sarpedon a life of three ages, as the favourite son of Jove. Apollod. *Bibl.* iii. 1, 2. Heyne, forgetful that we are here on mythic ground, wishes to follow Diodorus, who attempts to give the narrative an air of probability by making two Sarpedons, a grandfather and his grandson. Tiresias was said to have lived seven ages, and Agatharchides more than five. (Meurs. in *Lycophr.* v. 682.) Norna-Gest, as he lighted the candle on which his existence depended, said he was three hundred years old. (Norna-Gest Saga in Müller's *Saga-Bibliothek*, vol. ii. p. 113.) Toke-Tokefen was also fated to live two ages of man, *ib.* p. 117, and Hildebrand, the invincible champion and Mentor of Theodoric, died aged 180 or 200 years. *Ib.* 278.

<sup>4</sup> The sandal of Perseus found at Chemnis was two cubits in length. *Herod.* 2. c. 91. The footstep of Hercules shown in Scythia was of the same size. *Ib.* 4. c. 82, though the more sober traditions make his whole stature only four cubits and a foot. (Herod. *Ponticus ad Lycophr.* v. 663.) Lycophron calls Achilles τὸν ἴαστυχον, *Caf.* v. 860. The body of Orestes when found measured seven cubits (Herod. i. c. 68.) And for the large size of Ajax, Pelops and Theseus, see Paus. i. 35, v. 13, and Plut. in *Vit.* c. 36. A Feroe song says of Sigurdr (the Siegfried of the Nibelungen Lied), that he grew more in one month than others did in twelve. (Compare the romance of *Sir Gowther* and Homer's account of Otus and Ephialtes, *Od.* 11, 308.) He was so tall, that when he walked through a field of ripe rye, the point of his sword (which was seven spans long) might be seen above the standing corn. (Müller, p. 61.) A hair of his horse's tail, which Gest shewed King Oluf, measured seven ells. (*Ib.* p. 111.) Theodoric of Berne was two ells broad between the shoulders, tall as an Eten (giant), and stronger than any man would believe who had not seen him. (*Wilkins-Saga*, c. 14.) The grave of Gawain was fourteen feet long, the reputed stature of Little John. (Ritson.) Of Arthur, Higden has said: "Also have mynde that Arthures chynbone that was thenne (on the discovery of his body at Glastonbury) shewed, was lenger by thre ynches than the legge and the knee of the lengerest man, that was thenne founde." Also the face of his forhede, bytweene hys two eyen, was a spanne brode." Trevisa's transl. f. 290, rec. [The same feeling extended to scriptural and other personages. See a curious list in the *Reliquæ Antiquæ*, vol. i. p. 200.—Wright.]

sidering so, or the ruder ethics of an earlier period have substituted for such.

With regard to those standing types of popular fiction, which have been compared to the roots of language, the history of their application in various periods of society displays the same frequent recurrence of certain primitive images and the same series of ever-changing analysis and combination which mark the growth and progress of language itself. There will appear something fanciful perhaps in this comparison, yet the nearer we investigate it, the more we shall feel assured, that many of the laws which have governed the one are strictly analogous with those which have swayed the development of the other; and that, however much we may dispute as to the causes which have called forth these important phenomena of the mind, their subsequent regulation is considerably less equivocal. The mass of primitives in every language (even in those whose decided character gives them the aspect of parent dialects) is well known to bear a very small proportion to the wealth of its vocabulary; and at some stage of human existence, even these elementary terms must have been sufficient to express the wants, and effect an interchange of thought between the several members, of the community. As fresh necessities arose, and the bounds of knowledge became extended, the original types in their simple import would be unequal to the demands of every new occasion; and hence the introduction of a long roll of meanings to the primitives, and all the intricacies of analysis and synthesis, which have given wealth, dignity and expression to language. There is however no fact more certain within our knowledge of the past and our experience of the present, than that words neither have been nor are now invented; but that they always have been compounded from existing roots in the dialect requiring them, or borrowed from some collateral source; and for this very obvious reason, that any other mode of proceeding would wholly defeat the only end for which language was intended, the communication of our wishes, feelings, and opinions. That the progress of popular fiction has followed a nearly similar course, a slight consideration of the subject will tend to assure us. The extraordinary process already alluded to which, by endowing inanimate objects with sense, feeling and spirituality, robs man of his proudest distinction, is no new creation of elementary forms previously unknown, but a simple transference of peculiar properties, the characteristics of a more perfect class of beings, to others less perfectly constituted. The prophetic ship, the grateful ant, the courteous tree,<sup>1</sup> *et hoc genus omne*, are none of them subjected to any mutation in their physical qualities; they merely receive an additional grant of certain ethical attributes which, like secondary meanings in language, enlarge their power without varying their natural appearance. Even the personification of immaterial things, though approaching nearest to the plastic nature of

<sup>1</sup> See Grimm's *Kinder- und Haus-Märchen* and Muller's *Saga-Bibliothek, paſſim* [of the first of which Mr. Edgar Taylor published a translation, 2 vols. 1823-6.]

a really creative power, is but an extension of the same principle. For though in these the external forms be wholly supplied by the fancy, the inherent qualities of the thing personified furnish the outline of all its moral endowments ; and the contrast between the abstract property in its original state and the living image representing it is not more striking than between the different objects which are expressed in language by one common symbol.<sup>1</sup> The wildest efforts of the imagination can only exhibit to us a fresh combination of well-known types drawn from the store-house of nature ; and it is the propriety of the new arrangement, the felicitous juxtaposition of the stranger elements in their novel relation to each other, which marks the genius of the artist, which fixes the distance between a Boccaccio and a Troveur, a Shakespeare and a Broke.<sup>2</sup> The same chaste economy which has regulated the development of language is equally conspicuous in the history of popular fiction ; and, like the vocabulary of a nation once supplied with a stock of appropriate imagery, all its subsequent additions seem to have arisen in very slow progression. For this we must again refer to the prevailing state of society and the condition of those common agents by whom both subjects have been fostered. The more degraded the intellectual culture of a nation upon its first appearance in history, the poorer will be found its vocabulary with reference to the innate resources of the language ; and the subsequent wealth of every dialect will be discovered to have been attendant upon the progress of civilization and the acquisition of new ideas.<sup>3</sup> The patrons of popular fiction, as the very name implies, belong to that class of the community which, amid all the changes and revolutions that are operating around it, always retains a considerable portion of its primitive characteristics. Among these may be reckoned the narrow circle of its necessities in the use of language and expression and the modest demands of its intellectual tastes, so opposite to that later epicurism of the mind, a refined and learned taste, which is only to be appeased by an unceasing round of novelties. Unacquainted with the feverish joys occasioned by the use of strong and fresh excitements, popular taste only asks for a repetition of its favourite themes ; and, blest with the pure and limited wants of infancy, it listens to the "twice-told tale" with the eagerness and simplicity of a child. It is on this principle that every country in Europe has invested its popular fictions with the same common marvels ; that all acknowledge the agency of the lifeless productions of nature ; the intervention of the same supernatural machinery ; the existence of elves, fairies, dwarfs,

<sup>1</sup> The burning lava of Ætna was made the type of Typhæus's fury ; but the contrast here is not greater than between those objects of domestic use which are named after animals, such as a cat, dog, horse, &c.

<sup>2</sup> See Broke's poem on the subject of Romeo and Juliet in [Shakespeare's Library, 1843.]

<sup>3</sup> "J'ai eu des idées nouvelles ; il a bien fallu trouver des nouveaux mots, ou donner aux anciens de nouvelles acceptations," says Montesquieu in the Advertisement to his *Esprit des Loix*.

giants, witches, and enchanters ; the use of spells, charms, and amulets ; and all those highly-gifted objects, of whatever form or name, whose attributes refute every principle of human experience, which are to conceal the possessor's person, annihilate the bounds of space, or command a gratification of all our wishes. These are the constantly-recurring types which embellish the popular tale, which hence have been transferred to the more laboured pages of romance ; and which, far from owing their first appearance in Europe to the Arabic conquest of Spain, or the migration of Odin to Scandinavia, are known to have been current on its eastern verge long anterior to the era of legitimate history.<sup>1</sup> The Nereids of antiquity, the daughters of the “sea-born seer,” are evidently the same with the Mermaids of the British and Northern shores ; the habitations of both are fixed in crystal caves or coral palaces, beneath the waters of the ocean ; and they are alike distinguished for their partialities to the human race and their prophetic powers in disclosing the events of futurity. The Naiads only differ in name from the Nixen<sup>2</sup> of Germany and Scandinavia (Nisser), or the Water-Elves of our countryman *Ælfric* ; and the Nornæ, who wove the web of life and sang the fortunes of the illustrious Helga, are but the same companions who attended Ilithyia at the births of Iamos and Hercules.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, so striking is the resemblance between these divinities and the Grecian Moeræ, that we not only find them officiating at the birth of a hero, conferring upon him an amulet which is to endow him with a charmed existence, or cutting short the thread of his being ; but, like their prototype or parallel, varying in their number—from three to nine,—as they figure in their various avocations, of Nornæ or Valkyriar, as Parcae or Muses.<sup>4</sup> In the Highland Urisks,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It will be felt, that this intricate and copious subject could only be generally noticed here. More ample sources of information are to be found in the preface and notes to the *Kinder- und Haus-Märchen* of Messrs. Jacob and William Grimm, Sir W. Scott's *Essay on the Faeries of Popular Superstition*, (*Minstrelsy*, vol. ii.) and some useful collections in [*Pop. Antq. of Gr. Britain*, iii.] A further consideration of the subject is reserved for another occasion ; when the authorities for some opinions, which may appear either too bold or paradoxical, and which could not be introduced here, will be given at length.

<sup>2</sup> The Russian Rufalkis belong to the same family. They are represented as a race of beautiful virgins, with long green hair, living in lakes and rivers, and who were generally seen swinging on the branches of trees, bathing in the flood, or dressing their hair in the meads beside a running stream. Mone's continuation of Creuzer's *Symbolik*, vol. i. p. 145.

<sup>3</sup> Compare Helga quitha bin fyrsta, in Sæmund's *Edda*, with Pindar, *Ol.* vi. 72, and Anton. Liberalis, c. 29.

<sup>4</sup> A further illustration of this subject must also be reserved for a future publication.

<sup>5</sup> The Urisk has a figure between a goat and a man ; in short, precisely that of a Grecian Satyr.—Notes to the *Lady of the Lake*, p. 356. There are few antiquarian subjects requiring more revision than the modern nomenclature of this sylvan family. This confusion of character and name is nowhere more apparent than in the account of the ancient monuments in the British Museum. The Grecian Satyr is perfectly human in the lower extremities of his person : but the Panes (for the ancients acknowledged more than one Pan, as well as more than one Silenus) and Panisci preserved the legs and thighs of a goat.

the Ruffian Leshies,<sup>1</sup> and the Pomeranian or Wendish Berstucs,<sup>2</sup> we perceive the same sylvan family who, under the names of Panes and Panisci, presided over the fields and forests of Arcadia. The general meetings of the first were held on Ben-Venew, like the biennial assembly of the Fauns on Mount Parnassus; and the Slavonian hunter invoked the assistance of his Zlebog,<sup>3</sup> the Finn of his Wainamoinen,<sup>4</sup> and the Laplander of his Storjunkare,<sup>5</sup> with the same solemnity as that with which the Greek implored the aid of the “shaggy god of Arcady.” Another feature in the national creed of the same mountainous district of Greece is to be met with in the ballad of the Elfin-Gray;<sup>6</sup> and if the testimony of Aelfric, in his

<sup>1</sup> These Ruffian divinities had a human body, horns on the head, projecting pointed ears, and a bushy beard. Below they were formed like a goat. (Compare the well-known group of Pan and Olympus in the Villa Albani, and the representations of the same subject in the Pitture d'Ercolano.) They had the power of changing their stature as they pleased. When they walked through the glafs, they were just seen above it; in walking through forests, their heads ranged above the highest trees. Woods and groves were consecrated to them, and no one dared offend them, as they excited in the culprit's mind the most appalling terrors, or in a feigned voice seduced him through unknown ways to their caves, where they tickled him to death.—*Mone*, p. 143. Among the Finns these practices were attributed to a god Lekkio and a goddess Ajataa. The first assumed the form of a man, dog, crow, or some other bird, for the purpose of exciting terror; and the latter led the traveller astray.—*Ib.* 59. The reader will not fail to recognise in this the Panic terrors of the Arcadian god; and to be reminded of the Olympian invocation, which called Pan Rhea's *κύνες γαρράκης*. Pind. *Frag. ap. Aristot. Rhetor.* ii. 24. The irritable temperament of these sylvan deities is also common to their parallel.—*Theocritus*, *Id. i. v. 15.*

<sup>2</sup> The worship of these deities appears to have been common to all the Slavonic tribes situated between the Vistula and the Elbe. This district has been divided by some chroniclers into Pomerania and Vandalia, an arrangement which has caused the inhabitants of the latter to be confounded with the Teutonic invaders of the empire. The term in the text has been borrowed from the German to avoid this inaccuracy; but Trevifa has shown that there was a name for it in England: “Wyntlandia, that ilonde is by-west Denmark, and is a barren londe; and men [go there] out of byleve, they selle wynde to the shypmen that come to theyr portes and havenes, as it were clofed under knottes of threde. And as the knottes be unknytte the wynde wexe at theyr wylle.”—f. 32. In all their attributes, the Berstucs appear to have been the same with the Ruffian Leshies.

<sup>3</sup> The head of the Berstucs was Zlebog, usually explained “The angry god.”—Frenzel, *De Ditis Soraborum et aliorum Slavorum ap. Hoffmann, Script. Rer. Lusat.* tom. ii. p. 234-6. Care must be taken not to confound them with the Prussian dwarfs, called Barstuck; and who perhaps have usurped a name which designates their form rather than their occupation.

<sup>4</sup> Wainamoinen was the inventor of the kandele (a stringed instrument played like the guitar), and the author of all inventions which have benefited the human race. He was implored by the hunter, the fisherman, and the bird-catcher, to play upon his kandele, that the game might fall into their nets.—*Mone*, 54.

<sup>5</sup> This name has been borrowed from the Norwegians. In Torneå, Lapland, the same deity is called Seite. He is supreme lord of the whole animal creation (with the exception of the human race), and patron of hunting, fishing, &c. He frequently appears to the fishermen, &c., of Luleå, Lapmark, dressed like a Norwegian nobleman in black, of a tall and commanding figure, with the feet of a bird, and with a gun on his shoulder. His appearance never fails to produce a successful fishery or chase.—*Mone*, 36.

<sup>6</sup> See the Notes to the *Lady of the Lake*.

translation of Dryades by Wudu-Elfen, is to be received as anything more than a learned exercise,<sup>1</sup> the same notion must have prevailed in this country. But the collection from whence the ballad alluded to has been taken, the Danish *Kiæmpe-Viser*, contains more than this single example of such a belief; and the reader will find below<sup>2</sup> a local tradition, preserved in Germany, which will remind him of the conversation between Peræbius and an Hamadryad. How far the Duergar of the Edda were originally distinct from a similar class of dwarfish agents, who are to be met with in the popular creed of every European nation, cannot now be precisely ascertained.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> It may be questioned whether this catalogue of Ælfric's (dun-elfen, berg-elfen, munt-elfen, feld-elfen, wudu-elfen, fæ-elfen, water-elfen), ever obtained a circulation among the people. It is at least rendered extremely suspicious by its strict accordance with the import of the Grecian names. [I should take it to be a mad attempt to explain the meaning of the classical words by combinations of Anglo-Saxon words, and believe the Anglo-Saxon mythology had no beings of its own to which these combinations of words applied.—*Wright.*]

<sup>2</sup> "A peasant named Hans Krepel, being one day at work on a heath near Salzburg, 'a little wild or mos-swyfie' appeared to him, and begged that on leaving his labour he would cut three crosses on the last tree he hewed down. This request the man neglected to comply with. On the following day she appeared again, saying, 'Ah! my man, why did you not cut the three crosses yesterday? It would have been of service both to me and yourself. In the evening, and especially at night, we are constantly hunted by the wild huntmen, and are obliged to allow them to worry us, unless we can reach one of these trees with a cross on it; for from thence they have no power to remove us.' To this the boor replied with his wonted churlishness, 'Pooh! pooh! of what use can it be? how can the crosses help you? I shall do no such thing to please you, indeed.' Upon this the wyfie flew upon him, and squeezed him so forcibly that he became ill after it, notwithstanding he was a stout fellow. Such wyfies, and even mannikins, are said to dwell upon that heath, under the ground, or in obscure parts of the forest, and to have holes, in which they lie on green moss, as indeed they are said to be clothed all over with moss." Prætorius says, he heard this story from an old dame, who knew the before-mentioned Hans Krepel, and adds, the time of day was a [little] after noon, an hour not usually devoted to labour, because at such a time "this sort of diablerie frequently occurs."—*Anthropodemus Plutonicus*, Magdeburg, 1666, vol. ii. p. 231. For this superstitious attention to silence at noon, see Theocritus, *Id.* i. v. 15; and for the persecution of the Nymphs by Pan, the romance of Longus, p. 63, ed. Villoison, where it is said of him, *νείρας δὲ οὐδέποτε Δρυάσιν ἀπεχεῖ, καὶ Επιμηλοῖς Νύμφαις πράγματα παρέχειν.* The passage relative to the Hamadryad, who threatened Peræbius with the consequences of neglecting to prop the falling oak, in which she lived, is to be found in the *Schol. to Apollon.* Rhod. ii. v. 479.

<sup>3</sup> The Northern traditions relative to the Duergar are among the most obscure points of Eddaic lore, and are too important to be discussed in a note. Their residence in stones seems to be a portion of the same belief which gave rise to the *λίθαι μανύχαι* of antiquity. The author of the Orphic poem on stones mentions one in the possession of Helenus, which not only uttered oracular responses, but was perceived to breathe.—ver. 339 *et seq.* Photius (coll. 242, p. 1062, from the life of Isidorus by Damascius), mentions another in the possession of a certain Eusebius. This was a meteoric stone, which had fallen from heaven. On being asked to what deity it belonged, it replied, Gennæus—a god worshipped at the Syrian Heliopolis. Others were said to be subject to Saturn, Jupiter, the Sun, &c. (For this notion of the dæmons being the subordinate followers of some superior god, whose name they bore, see Plutarch, *De Defectu Orac. 21.*) This will serve to illustrate the account given by Pausanias of the thirty stones at Phœæ, each of which was

earliest memorials of them in the fictions of Germany and Scandinavia present us with the same metallurgic divinities who, in the mythology of Hellas, were known by the various names of Cabiri, Hephaësti, Telchines, and Idæan Dæctyli.<sup>1</sup> In the other countries of Europe the traces of their existence as a separate class, chiefly occupied in the labours of the forge, are not so clearly defined; and if a few scattered traditions<sup>2</sup> seem to favour a contrary opinion, it is equally certain that they have been more frequently confounded with a kindred race, the Brownies or Fairies. The former, as is well known, are the same diminutive beings with the Lares of Latium, an order of beneficent spirits, whom Cicero<sup>3</sup> has taught us to consider as nearly identical with the Grecian Daemon. In Germany they have received a long catalogue of appellations, all descriptive of their form, their disposition, or their dress; but whether marked by the title of Gutichen, Brownie, Lar, or Dæmon, we observe in all the same points of general resemblance; all have been alike regarded as the guardians of the domestic hearth, the awarders of prosperity, and the averters of evil; and the author of the Orphic Hymn endows the particular Dæmon of his invocation with the same attributes that are given by Hildebrand to the whole tribe of Gutichens or “gude neighbours.”<sup>4</sup> The English Puck, the Sco-

---

inscribed with the name of some god (vii. c. 22). Damascius thought the stone in question to be under divine, Isidorus only demoniacal, influence. Photius treats the whole story as a mere piece of jugglery. Plato, however, has said, that these lithic oracles were of the same antiquity as that of the oak at Dodona. *Phædrus*, 276.

<sup>1</sup> The spirit of later times, with its characteristic tendency of studying beauty of form in all its imagery, having converted these ancient deities into the youthful Curetes, Corybantes and Dioscuri, a confusion arose in the nomenclature of them which wholly baffled the attempts of Strabo to reduce into a system. See the tenth book of this geographer, under the head of *Theologoumena*. The Dwarf of ancient mythology is perhaps best represented on the coins of Cosyra, where the figure closely accords with the description of the mining dwarf given by Prætorius, i. p. 243. Another representation, from the creed of Egypt, may be seen among the terra-cottas of the British Museum, No. 42. Mr. Coombe calls “this short naked human figure” Osiris; but there can be little doubt that it exhibits the dwarfish god of Memphis, whose deformity excited the scorn and ridicule of Cambyses. This deity, whether we call him Phthas or Hephaëstus, resembled in his person the Patæci or tutelary divinities of Phenicia, to whom Herodotus has assigned the figure of a pygmy man. (*Thaliz*, c. 37.) The attributes on this and a similar monument may be easily accounted for. The reader who is desirous of learning the esteem in which these divinities were held in the ancient world, may consult a treatise, *On the Deities of Samothrace*, by Mr. von Schelling, a gentleman chiefly known in Europe for his philosophical works, but who is known to his friends for his extensive erudition in every branch of ancient and modern learning, and who, among the numerous virtues that adorn his private character, is particularly distinguished for his hospitality to the “stranger, who sojourns in a foreign land.”

<sup>2</sup> *Essay on the Faeries of popular Superstition*, p. 163.

<sup>3</sup> “Quanquam enim Dæmon latius patere quodam modo videatur, non dubito tamen quin melius sit Larem quam Dæmonem vertere, ut sit species pro genere.” *De Universitate*.

<sup>4</sup> Hymn 72, and Hildebrand, *vom Hexenwerke*, p. 310.

tish Bogle, the French [Fifollet] or Goblin—the Gobelinus of monkish Latinity—and the German Kobold, are only varied names for the Grecian Kobalus,<sup>1</sup> whose sole delight consisted in perplexing the human race, and calling up those harmless terrors that constantly hover round the minds of the timid. To excite the wrath, indeed, of this mischievous spirit was attended with fatal consequences to the luckless objects who rashly courted it; and Prætorius<sup>2</sup> has preserved a notice of his cruelty to some miners of St. Anneberg, to whom he appeared under the guise of the Scottish Kelpie with a horse's head, and whom he destroyed by his pestiferous breath. The midnight depredators mentioned by Gervase of Tilbury, who oppressed the sleeper, injured his person, despoiled his property, and bore off his children, are either confounded by that worthy chronicler with the separate characters of the Ephialtes and Lamia; or the local creed of some particular spot had concentrated in his day the propensities of both in one personage. The numerous tales gathered by Prætorius observe the classical distinctions of antiquity; with them it is the Incubus or Alp, who causes those painful sensations during sleep, which the ancient physicians have so aptly termed the nocturnal epilepsy; and it is the same race of mis-shapen old hags with the Lamiæ of Gervase<sup>3</sup> who, like the ancient Lamia larvata, alternately terrify and carry away the infant from his cradle.

<sup>1</sup> See the Scholia to Aristoph. *Plut.* v. 279. The English and Scotch terms are the same as the German "Spuk," and the Danish "Spogelse," without the sibilant aspiration. These words are general names for any kind of spirit, [but do not seem to] correspond to the "Pouk" of Piers Ploughman, [which is simply *the Devil*.] In Danish "spog" means a joke, trick, or prank; and hence the character of Robin Goodfellow. In Iceland Puki is regarded as an evil sprite; and in the language of that country, "at pukra" means both to make a murmuring noise, and to steal clandestinely. The names of these spirits seem to have originated in their boisterous temper. "Spuken," Germ., to make a noise; "spog," Dan., obstreperous mirth; "pukke," Dan., to boast, scold. The Germans use "pochen" in the same figurative sense, though literally it means to strike, beat, and is the same with our *poke*. In Ditmarsh, the brownie, or domestic fairy, is called "Nitiche-Puk." The French "gobelin" seems to spring either from a diminutive—Koboldein? or a feminine termination, Koboldinn?

<sup>2</sup> i. p. 140.

<sup>3</sup> With this class must also be reckoned the Gyre-Carline, or mother-witch of Scotland, whose name is so expressive of her character (gyr-falcon, ger-hound, Trevisa):

"Thair dwelt ane grit Gyre-Carling, in awlid Betokis bour,  
That levit upoun Christiane menis flesche, and rewheids unleipit."

In this she becomes identified with the "Raw-head-and-bloody-bones" of the English nursery. In the fiction on which the beautiful ballad of Glenfinlas is founded, we have the poetic version of her character; and of which Vossius has said, "Nam erant Lamiae spectra in formosarum mulierum figuram conformata, quæ adolescentes formosos voluptatibus deludebant, dum eos devorarent."—*Etymolog. S. Lat. in Lamia*. Compare also Diodorus's account of the Queen of Libyfla, l. xx. p. 754. Vossius has likewise shown that the same notion was current in Judæa. There is one circumstance in the history of the Gyre-Carline, which runs through all mythology:

"Lang or Betok was born  
Scho (the G. Carline) bred of an acorne."

Sir Walter Scott, from whose *Essay On the Faeries of Popular Superstition* the preceding notice of the Lamiæ recorded by Gervase has been taken, has also extracted from the *Phylica Curiosa* of Schott a Frisian account of the same destructive tribe, where a similar confusion appears to prevail, though with a different class of spirits. “In the time of the Emperor Lotharius, in 830, says Schott, many spectres infested Friesland, particularly the white nymphs of the ancients, which the moderns denominate ‘witte wiven,’ who inhabited a subterraneous cavern, formed in a wonderful manner, without human art, on the top of a lofty mountain. These were accustomed to surprise benighted travellers, shepherds watching their herds and flocks, and women newly delivered with their children, and convey them into their caverns, from which subterraneous murmurs, the cries of children, the groans and lamentations of men, and sometimes imperfect words and all kinds of musical sounds were heard to proceed.” Divested of the colouring which seems to identify these spectres “with the fairies of popular opinion,” a parallel fiction is related by Antonius Liberalis (c. 8) in his account of Sybaris, to whom others gave the more appropriate title of Lamia; and, with a change of sex in the agent, the same idea is found in the curious narratives of Pausanias and Aelian, relative to the “dark dæmon” or hero of Temessa.<sup>1</sup> The earliest memorial of

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Aelian. *Hist.* viii. c. 18. Pausanias, vi. 6. The people of Temessa having slain a companion of Ulysses (who had violated the chastity of a virgin), his spirit sought revenge, by carrying slaughter and destruction into every house and the whole country round. The Pythian oracle recommended the erection of a temple, the consecration of a grove, and an annual sacrifice of the fairest virgin in Temessa, as the only means of appeasing the angry spirit. This was done. On one of these occasions, an Olympian victor named Euthymus, inspired by mingled feelings of love and compassion for the beautiful victim, resolved on effecting her rescue; and having awaited the arrival of the dæmon, a struggle ensued, from which the latter made his escape, and for ever, by sinking into the sea. The ravages of Grendel appear to have been prompted by the death of an uncle. Hrothgar (in whose palace the spirit's nightly incursions are made) and his council vainly implore the powers of hell (it is a Christian who thus denominates the gods of the heathen king) for the means of commuting the deadly feud. The intelligence reaches Beowulf, a champion who had acquired an extensive reputation by his victories over the nicors or nivers, a species of sea monster of which many fables are current at the present day in Iceland, and who, in the true spirit of a berserkr, undertakes the task of subduing Grendel from a pure love of glory. The result in both fables is the same. The dark dæmon is worsted and sinks into a lake, where he afterwards is found dead of his wounds. The female spirit is Grendel's mother's, who answers to the description of A. Liberalis. It may be worth noticing that a picture preserved at Temessa, representing the combat of Euthymus, exhibited the dæmon clothed in a wolf-skin, and the name of the northern hero is Beo-wulf, the wolf-tamer. [Mr. Richard Taylor has remarked: “If *wif* be considered to mean Help, as in Rad-ulf, Bot-ulf, &c., the *w* may belong to the first syllable. In a short note which I communicated to Mr. Conybeare (*Illustrations of A. Saxon Poetry*, 1826, p. 286), I suggested that Beow, or Beowius, of the genealogies in the Saxon Chronicle and W. of Malmesbury was identical with Beowulf, ‘Cutha and Cuthwulf being also used indifferently; Comp. A. 495 and 854.’ Beaw occupies the same place in the series with Biuf of Snorro's Edda, ed. Goransson.” Kemble has pointed out the place in Saxon Mythic History, and has given the meaning of the word Beowulf.—Wright.]

them in European fiction is preserved to us in the [Swedish] poem of Beowulf [and its Anglo-Saxon paraphrase]. In this curious repository of genuine Northern tradition, by far the most interesting portion of the work is devoted to an account of the hero's combats with a male and female spirit, whose nightly ravages in the hall of Hrothgar are marked by all the atrocities of the Grecian fable.

Under the comprehensive name of Fairy, almost every member of the preceding catalogue has been indiscriminately mingled in the living recitals of the cotter's family circle, and the printed collections of our popular tales. A slight attention, however, to the distinctive marks established in the ancient world will easily remedy the confusion; and few readers will require to be told, that the fairies who attend the birth and foretell the fortunes of a hero or heroine, who connect the destinies of some favoured object with the observance of a command or the preservation of an amulet, are the venerable Parcae of antiquity. The same rule will hold good of the rest; and it therefore only remains to notice the Fairy of romance, and the Elf or Fairy of the mountain-heath. The former has been considered to have derived her origin from the same country which has supplied us with the name. For this hypothesis there is better reason than usually attaches itself to the solution of an antiquarian problem by the etymologist; and Warton has already shown that the titles of the most distinguished in European romance are borrowed almost to the letter from the fables of the East. The Persian Mergian and Urganda have unquestionably furnished Italian poetry with its Morgana and Urganda; and there is considerable plausibility in the assertion,<sup>1</sup> that the Peri of the former country has been transmitted through the medium of the Arabic. But uniformity of name, even admitting an identity of character, is insufficient to prove that the idea attached to the new appellative is of no older date in the country to which it has been transferred than the period when the stranger term was first introduced. The Pelasgian priest-

<sup>1</sup> [Further examination wholly excludes the supposed connection of the word FAIRY with the Persian PERI. Indeed, as *feerie* is obviously formed from *Fée* in the same manner as *diablerie* from *diable*, or *chevalerie* from *cheval*, the origin of the monosyllable fay or fee only is to be sought, without the formative termination; and the forms in which this word and its congeners exist in the romance dialects seem to leave no doubt that the Latin *fatum* is its real source.

Latin.	Italian.	Span. <i>Spanis.</i>	Frem. <i>Fremb.</i>
Fatum.	Fato.	Hado, fate.	
Fata, the Fates.	Fata, <i>enchantress.</i>	Hadas, hadadas, witches, Fee. enchanted nymphs.	
Fatum, defined.	Fatare, to charm.	Hadar, to divine.	Fee, to enchant.
	Fatare, <i>defined</i> , charmed.	Hadado, lucky.	Fée.
	Fatatura, charm.	Hadador, <i>forever.</i>	Féerie.

Mr. Tyrwhitt has the following note on the word *faerie* in the *Wife of Bath's Tale*: "Féeerie, from *fée*, the French name for those fantastical beings which in the Gothick languages are called alfs or elves. The corresponding names to *fée* in the other romance dialects are *fata*, Ital. and *hada*, Span.; so that it is probable that all three are derived from the Lat. *fatum* which, in the barbarous ages, was corrupted into *fatus* and *fata*. See Menage in v. *Fee* and Du Cange in v. *Fadus*."

—R. Taylor.

[See also Mr. Keightley's *Fairy Mythology*, 1833, i. 11, and ii. 239, and his *Tales and Popular Fictions*, 1834, p. 340; and M. Alfred Maury, *Les Fées du Moyen Age*, 1843, where the derivation of *fairy* from *fatum* is sustained and exemplified.]

hood recommended the adoption of *Ægyptian* titles for the unnamed divinities of Hellenic worship, on discovering that their secret had been divulged ; and the adoration of the *Bætyli* precedes the annals of authentic history in Greece, while the name is of foreign extraction, and evidently borrowed at a very late period. If therefore the English “fairy,” or the French “*feérie*,” have been imported from the East, the term itself must be of comparatively recent date ; though the popular notion respecting the nature and attributes of the beings who bore it is wholly lost in the twilight of antiquity. There is no essential difference between the Persian *Peri* and the Grecian *Nymph*, however variedly the inventive genius of either country may have endowed them in points of minor consideration. They are both the common offspring of the same speculative opinion which peopled the elements with a race of purer essences, as the connecting link between man and his Creator ; and the modern Persian, in adopting those “who hover in the balmy clouds,”<sup>1</sup> live in the colours of the rainbow, and exist on the odour of flowers,” has only fixed his choice upon a different class from the ancient Greek. It will, however, be remembered, that in the particulars just enumerated, the Fairies of Italian romance bear no resemblance to the *Peris* of the East ; and that, in almost everything else except the name, they are for the most part only a reproduction of the *Circe* and *Calypso* of the *Odyssey*. The Fairies in the *Lays of Lanval* and *Graelent*, or in the romances of *Melusina* and *Partenopex de Blois*, have neither the gross propensities of the daughter of *Helios*, nor the power and exalted rank of the *Ogygian* enchantress. They approach nearer, both in character and fortunes, to the nymphs who sought the alliance or yielded to the importunities of *Daphnis* and *Rhœucus*,<sup>2</sup> and, like their Grecian predecessors, were equally doomed to experience the hollow frailty of human engagements. The conditions imposed upon the heroes of Hellenic fable were the same in substance, though somewhat differing in form from those enjoined the knights of French romance, and were alike transgressed from motives of self-gratification or a weak compliance with the solicitations of others. There is something more consolatory in the final catastrophe attached to the modern fictions ; but this, as is well known, has been taken, in common with the general outline of the events, from the beautiful *apologue* of *Apuleius*. One of the earliest tales of faery in our own language, and perhaps the most important for the influence it seems to have had on later productions, is contained in the old romance of *Orfeo* and [Merondys].<sup>3</sup> The leading

<sup>1</sup> These aerial nymphs were not foreign to the Grecian creed ; at least the celestial nymphs of *Mneumachus* can only be accounted for on this notion. *Schol. in Apollon. Rhod. iv. v. 1412.*

<sup>2</sup> For *Daphnis* see *Parthenius*, c. 18 ; for *Rhœucus*, *Schol. in Apoll. Rhod. ii. v. 479*. See also the *History of Caunus in Conon*, c. 2. ; and of *Philammon*, ib. c. 7.

<sup>3</sup> It is to be regretted that Mr. Ritson chose to follow the Harleian MS. of this romance, which is so palpably inferior to the *Auchinleck* copy. [But a still better text was printed by Mr. Halliwell in his *Illustrations of Fairy Mythology*, 1845, from *Ashmole MS. 61.*]

incidents of this poem have been borrowed from the classical story of Orpheus and Eurydice, and Mr. Ritson has truly pronounced its character in saying, 'This lay or tale is a Gothic metamorphosis of the episode so beautifully related by Ovid. A later writer, from whose authority it is rarely safe to deviate, and to whose illustrations of popular fiction the present sketch is so much indebted, has rejected this opinion, and produced it as an example of *Gothic Mythology engraven on the fables of Greece*.'<sup>1</sup> In support of this assertion, even Sir W. Scott's extensive knowledge of the subject might find it difficult to offer anything like satisfactory proof.

The minor embellishments of the poem, the rank and quality of Orpheus, the picture of his court, the occupations of the Elfin king, and the fortunate issue of the harper's descent, are certainly foreign to the Grecian story, and have been either copied from the institutions of the minstrel's age, or are the ready suggestions of his own invention. But the whole machinery of the fable—the power of Pluto and his queen (for such Chaucer has instructed us to call the King of Faery), the brilliant description of Elfin land, its glorious abodes and delightful scenery, and the joyous revelry of those who had secured a residence in the regions of bliss, and the miseries

Of folke that were thidder ybrought,  
And thought dead and were nought,—

are of legitimate Grecian origin, and may be read with little variety of style, though with less minuteness of detail, in the visions of Thespelus and Timarchus, recorded by Plutarch.<sup>2</sup>

The history of such descents, whether professing to be made in person, or by a separation of "the intelligent soul" from its grosser fellow and the body,<sup>3</sup> was a favourite topic in the ancient world;

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on the Faeries, &c., ut supra*, [and Keightley's *Fairy Mythology*].

<sup>2</sup> *De Sera Num. Vind.* c. 22 (where the text reads Soleus the Thebanian; but Wytténbach has approved of Reiske's correction which reverses the terms) and *De Genio Socrat.* c. 22. If to these the reader will add Pindar's description of the Elysian amusements (cited in Plut. *Consol. ad Apoll.* c. 35, and with some additions in his tract *De Occulte Vivendo*, c. vii.) and the narrative of the Socratic *Aeschines* (*Axiochus*, § 20) on the same subject, he will find a parallel for almost every peculiarity of these regions mentioned in the Auchinleck MS. of Orfeo. The popular view of the subject is discussed in his usual manner by Lucian in his several pieces, *Ver. Hisf.* ii. *Necyom.* *Catapl.* and *Philops.*, and a compound of esoteric and exoteric doctrines on the same point is to be found in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes. Sir W. Scott jocosely confounds the ymp-tree a tree consecrated to some demon, rather than a grafted tree, as interpreted by Mr. Ritson. This point of popular superstition seems to be referred to by Socrates in the *Phædrus* where, with his accustomed style of irony, he ascribes a sudden fit of nympholepsy to the vicinage of a plane-tree adorned with images, and dedicated to the Nymphs. (*Phædr.* 276). But this idea of demoniacal trees enters deeply into Northern and Oriental mythology. The lady Similt, while seated beneath a linden tree, is carried off by King Laurin in the same clandestine manner that the King of Faerie conveys away Heurodis. (See Weber's *Illustrations of Northern Antiquities*, p. 150.) The rock of the entrance to the fairy realm is the *λαύρα* *πύρην* of the *Odyss.* xxiv. 11; and perhaps the *lapis manalis* of Latium.

<sup>3</sup> See Wytténbach's note to the vision of Thespelus concerning this division of the soul into *μῶς* and *ψυχή*, and the sources from whence Plutarch obtained it.

and many visions of the infernal regions, which are made to figure in modern hagiology, from the narrative of Bede<sup>1</sup> to the metrical legend of Owain Miles, have borrowed largely from these pagan sources. It is however obvious that Chaucer's "Pluto King of Fayrie" and his "Queen Proserpina" have been derived from this or a similar source; and the confusion which has arisen between the fairies of romance and the elves of rural tradition may in all probability be ascribed "to those poets who have adopted his phraseology." By Dunbar Pluto is styled "an elricke incubus in a clothe of grene," the well-known elfin livery; and Montgomery confers upon the "king of Pharie" the same verdant garb, an elvish stature, and weds him to the elf-queen.

All graithed into green,  
Some hobland on ane hempstalke, hoveand to the hight,  
The king of Pharie and his court, with the Elfe Queene,  
With many elrich Incubus was rydand that night.<sup>2</sup>

There is nothing in the *Marchaunt's Tale* to justify this diminution of King Pluto's fair proportions, or to identify Queen Proserpina with the elf-queen. But in another of Chaucer's tales, the practices of the latter and her followers are called *faeries* or illusive visions; and it will easily be felt that the use of a common name, to denote their respective actions, might eventually lead to the notion of a community of character.

In olde dayes of the kyng Arthour—  
Al was this lond fulfilled of *fayrie*;  
The elf-queen with hir joly compaignie,  
Daunced ful oft in many a grene mede—  
But now can no man fee noon elves mo,  
For the grete charite and prayeres  
Of lymytours and other holy freres,  
That fechen every lond and every strem—  
That makith that ther ben no *faieries*.  
For ther as wont to walken an elf  
Ther walketh noon but the lymytour himself.<sup>3</sup>

However this may be, there can be little doubt that at one period the popular creed made the same distinctions between the Queen of Faerie and the Elf-queen that were observed in Grecian mythology between their undoubted parallels, Artemis and Persephone. At present the traces of this division are only faintly discernible; and in the Scotch ballad of Tamlane (*Minstrelsy*, vol. ii.) the hero, though "a wee wee man," declares himself a *fairy* both in "lyth and limb," a communication which leaves us at no loss to divine the size of the fairy queen who had "borrowed him." The beautiful ballad of Thomas the Rhymer,<sup>4</sup> and even the burlesque

<sup>1</sup> *Historia Ecclesiastica*, lib. v. c. 13. Compare also the vision or trance of the Pamphylian Er in Plato's *Rep.* lib. x. *in fine*.

<sup>2</sup> [Poems, edit. 1821, p. 113-14.]

<sup>3</sup> [Bell's *Chaucer*, ii. 72-4.]

<sup>4</sup> The editor has already sinned too deeply against the fame of true Thomas, to make the concealment of his opinion respecting this mysterious personage a saving con-

imitation of some forgotten romance by Chaucer in his *Rhyme of Sir Thopas*, make the elf-queen either joint or sole sovereign of fairy-land, while the locality, scenery and inhabitants of the country prove it to be the same district described in *Sir Orfeo*. In the former fiction she is represented as only quitting the court of her grisly spouse, to chase the "wild fee" upon earth;<sup>1</sup> her costume and attributes are of the same sylvan cast with those which distinguished the huntress-queen of antiquity; and the fame of her beauty inspires the lovelorn Sir Thopas with the same rash resolves which from a similar cause were said to have fired the bosom of Pirithous. In the remaining details of Thomas the Rhymer, she is clearly identified with the daughter of Demeter; and the description of the journey to elf-land<sup>2</sup> will remind the reader of a story in *Ælian* respecting the fabled Anostos, or that country whose expressive name has been so aptly paraphrased—

The bourne from whence no traveller returns.

In the Grecian fiction, "the blude that's shed on earth" seems rather to have impregnated the atmosphere,<sup>3</sup> than dyed "the springs of that countrie:" but the rivers that flowed around it, the waters of joy and grief, each produced a tree whose fruits were as marvellous in their effects as the apple bestowed on "true Thomas." Nor is the prophetic power acquired by the Rhymer, in consequence of his visit to this unearthly region, a novel feature in the history of such fictions. In one of Plutarch's tracts,<sup>4</sup> a certain Cleombrotus enter-

---

dition on which he might build a hope of forgiveness for his previous indiscretion. He will therefore further state that, after contrasting the little we know of the real with the fictitious history of "auld Rymer," he has arrived at that conviction, which is easier felt than accounted for, that the laird of Erceldoun has usurped the honours and reputation of some earlier seer, and gathered round his name the local tradition of his birthplace. The strong power of local association has been sufficiently manifested in the character acquired by a recent resident at Erceldoun. See preface to *Sir Tristrem*.

<sup>1</sup> A very *veracious* gentleman in one of Lucian's dialogues has borne testimony to the hunting propensities of the Queen of Hell, whom he calls Hecate. (*Phallos*, c. 17.) The account of the elf-queen and her followers while engaged in the chase may be compared with *Od.* vii. 101, and Virgil's imitation of the same passage, *Aen.* i. 498.

<sup>2</sup> Three days they travel through darkness, up to their knees in water, and only hear the "swowynge of the flode." In this we have the ocean stream and Cimmerian darkness, *Od.* xi. 13. The spot where Thomas laid his head in the lady's lap is the same cross-way in which Minos, Rhadamanthus and Æacus held their tribunal; one of whose roads led to the isles of the blest, and the other to Tartarus, *Plat. Gorg.* p. 524. The forbidden fruit, whose taste cut off all hope of return, is another version of the pomegranate-apple which figures so mysteriously in the history of Proserpine.

<sup>3</sup> See *Ælian, Var. Hist.* iii. 18. In Lucian's *Ver. Hist.* ii. 3 (and which contains only exaggerated statements of popular opinion), one of the rivers encompassing his region of torment flows with blood. The bloody Acherousian rock in Aristophanes (*Frogs*, 474) appears to be connected with a similar notion.

<sup>4</sup> *De Defectu Oraculorum*, c. 21. Lucian plays upon the supposed knowledge of future events gained by a visit to the infernal regions, in his *Ver. Hist.* ii. and *Philops*. For the use made of it by modern poets see Heyne's *Fourteenth Excursus to the Sixth Book of the Æneid*.

tains the company with an account of an eastern traveller, whose character and fortunes are still more remarkable than those of the Scotch seer. Of this man we are told that he only appeared among his fellow mortals once a year. The rest of his time was spent in the society of the nymphs and demons, who had granted him an unusual share of personal beauty, and rendered him proof against disease, and supplied him with a fruit which was to satisfy his hunger, and of which he partook only once a month. He was moreover endowed with a miraculous gift of tongues, his conversation resembled a spontaneous flow of verse, his knowledge was universal, and an annual visitation of prophetic fervour enabled him to unfold the hidden secrets of futurity.

The elves and fairies of rural tradition who "dance their ringlets to the whistling wind," and the traces of whose midnight revels are still detected on the sward, seem originally to have been distinguished from the fairies of romance by their diminutive stature and the use of a common livery. In the former circumstance popular fiction has only been faithful to the earliest creed of nations respecting the size and form of their domestic and inferior deities, and of which examples are to be found in the household gods of Laban, the Pataeci of Phenicia, the Cabiri of Egypt and Samothrace, the Idæan Daçyli of Crete, the Anaces of Athens, the Dioscuri of Lacedæmon, the earth-god Tages of Etruria, and the Lares of Latium. It would be out of place to enter here upon the probable causes which have led to this community of opinions as to the stature of these subordinate divinities; and it will be sufficient to remark, that the practice of romance in elevating them to the standard of "human mortals"<sup>1</sup> has only followed an ancient precedent already noticed in speaking of the dwarfs. There is even reason to believe that the occasional adoption of a larger form was not only inconsistent with the popular belief on the subject, since the fairy of Alice Pearson once appeared to her in "the guise of a lustie man," and the ballad of Tamlane admits a change of shape to be a leading characteristic of the whole fairy race :

Our shape and size we can convert  
To either large or small;  
An old nutshell's the same to us  
As is the lofty hall.<sup>2</sup>

But the stature of the elves and fairies who presided over the

<sup>1</sup> A distinction used by Titania in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act ii. Sc. 2.

<sup>2</sup> The minor details of this ballad wear too modern an aspect to make it of authority, unless supported by other testimony. The story, however, is indisputably ancient. The same power has been already noticed in the Russian Leshies, and is also ascribed to King Laurin in the *Little Garden of Roses*, p. 153.

" Little was king Laurin, but from many a precious gem  
His wondrous strength and power and his bold courage came;  
Tall at times his stature grew, with spells of grammar,  
Then to the noblest princes fellow might he be."

mountain-heath will find a parallel in a kindred race, the rural Lars of Italy; while their attributes, their habitations, their length of life, and even their name, will establish their affinity with the Grecian nymphs. "Their drinking-cup or horn," which was "to prove a cornucopia of good fortune to him who had the courage to seize it,"<sup>1</sup> is the sacred chalice of the nymphs, whose inexhaustible resources are so frequently noticed in Grecian fable, and to which we shall again have occasion to refer. The places of their abode,—the interior of green hills, or the islands of a mountain-lake, with all the gorgeous decorations of their dwellings,—are but a repetition of the Dionysic and nymphæc caves described by Plutarch and Diodorus;<sup>2</sup> and their term of life, like the existence of the daughters of Ocean, though extending to an immeasurable length<sup>3</sup> when compared with that of the human race, had still its prescribed and settled limits. To this it may be added, that the different appellations assigned them in Hellas and Northern Europe appear to have arisen from a common idea of their nature; and that in the respective languages of these countries the words *elf* and *nymph*<sup>4</sup> convey a similar meaning.

After this brief review of a most important subdivision of the elements of popular fiction, it will not be too much to affirm that, if their introduction into Europe and their application to the embellishment of romantic poetry had been dependent upon foreign agency, the national creed of Greece has the fairest claim to be considered as the parent source. But in this, as in so many other points of public faith common to the Greek and the Barbarian, it is impossible not to perceive the fragments of a belief brought from some earlier seat of empire, and which neither could have been imported into Hellas and Western Europe by a new dynasty of kings, nor communicated by a band of roving minstrels. In the

<sup>1</sup> See the *Essay on the Fairies*, &c. where mention is made of the goblet preserved in Eden-hall in Cumberland, on which the prosperity of the Musgrave family depended. Prætorius informs us that a member of the house of Alveschleben received a ring from a Nixe, to which the future fortunes of his descendants were said to be attached. *Anthropodæmus Plutonicus*, i. p. 113. Another German family, the Ranzaus, held their prosperity by the tenure of a fairy spindle. *Ib.* p. 115. The Scholia to Lucian's *Rhet. Præcept.* says, that every prosperous person was supposed to have Amalthea's horn in his possession.

<sup>2</sup> See Plutarch *de Sera Num. Vind.*, and Diod. Sic. lib. iii. c. 68.

<sup>3</sup> For the lives of the fairies, see Mr. Reed's note to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in the variorum edition of Shakespeare; for that of the nymphs (which Hesiod makes equal to nine thousand seven hundred and twenty years), Plutarch *De Defectu Oraculor.* c. xi. Pindar gives the Dryads a much shorter term, or a life equivalent to that of the trees they inhabit. *Ib.*

<sup>4</sup> In the Northern languages *elf* means a stream of running water, and hence the name of the River Elbe. The Grecian *νύμφη* has the same import with the Latin *lympha*, an idea which is also preserved in the Roman name for the disease called Nympholepsy. "Vulgo autem memorie proditum est, quicumque speciem quandam e fonte, id est, effigiem nymphæ viderint, furendi non fecisse finem, quos Graeci νυμφοληπτοι, Latini *lymphantos* appellant." Festus, *ap.* Salm. *Exercit. Plin.* 765. [Alveus, Alpheus.]

illustrations they have received during the long course of their preservation, and under circumstances so varying as all the public and private events that fill the histories of these countries, there will of course be many particulars exhibiting little affinity with each other, and which, taken separately, may seem to deny this community of their origin. But even these, when carefully examined, will be mostly found to resolve themselves into distinctions arising from a difference of national character, or corruptions produced by some later change in national institutions; and the most discordant will hardly afford a stronger contrast in their lineaments than the physical differences displayed in the conformation of the human frame upon the shores of the Ægean Sea and the banks of the Frozen Ocean. In Greece, like every thing else which has been exposed to the refining taste of that extraordinary people, they will all be found submitted to the same plastic norm which fitted the bard's "thick-coming fancies" for the studies of the sculptor: and in modern Europe a new religion, in attempting to curtail their influence or obliterate the remembrance of them, has more or less corrupted the memorials of their attributes. It is to the latter that we must more particularly look for an explanation of those anomalies, which not only appear to contradict our recollections of antiquity, but occasionally to exhibit the popular faith as being at variance with itself. It will scarcely need remark, that the introduction of Christianity among the nations of the West must speedily have effected a change in general opinion as to the right and the degree in which these imaginary divinities were commissioned to exert a power over the destinies of man. But so gradual were the successes of the triumphant faith over this particular branch of the ancient creed, that although the memory of "Thunaer, Wodan, and Saxnote,"<sup>(?)</sup><sup>1</sup> is scarcely

<sup>1</sup> Such are the names of the three divinities mentioned in the Francic profession of faith published by Ecard. *Francia Orientalis*, vol. i. p. 440. *Ek forfacho. .... Thunaer ende Woden, ende Saxnote, end allem them unholdum theira genotas sint. I renounce (forfake) Thunaer and Wodan and Saxnote, and all those impious (spirits) that are their associates.* The name of Saxnote has been a stumbling-block to the critics, and appears likely to remain so. In its present condition the word has certainly no intelligible meaning, and, if correct, refers to a deity of whom no other trace exists. The usual interpretation, Saxon Odin, is a mere conjecture, and certainly not a happy one. The same may be said of Mr. A. W. Schlegel's emendation (*Indische Bibliothek*, p. 256) of Saxnote or assembly of the Saxons, at which they celebrated heathen festivals, and which is as objectionable on the score of grammar as the decried Saxnote. One remarkable circumstance in the present text is, that Thunaer and Wodan are not inflected, while the conjunction has gained the very addition in which they are defective. It is to be regretted that no one has consulted the original document since the publication of the first transcript. It is difficult to understand why this formulary should be made the foundation of a theory, that Wodan and Odin are distinct personages. The well-known practice of the Scandinavian dialects, which suppresses the aspirate in all those words that in the cognate tongues begin with a *w*, will sufficiently account for the difference of orthography. That they occupied the same rank in the respective mythologies of the two great Teutonic stocks, is confirmed by the days named after them. In England we have had successively Wodnes-dag and Wednesday (*prout* Wensday). In Denmark it has been Odins-dagr and Oens-dag. It was from this circumstance,

distinguishable among the documents of several centuries, a continued belief in the agency of their subordinate associates still maintains its sway over every sequestered district of Northern Europe. Perhaps the sweeping clause which was to embrace the whole of this fraternity, and who were far too numerous to be specifically named, either admitted of an accommodating latitude in the interpretation, or was taken with considerable mental reservation. However this may be, we shall have no difficulty in believing that the expounders of the new religion were rarely free from those impressions which, imbibed in early infancy, the reason vainly struggles to eradicate in after life, and of which it may be said that however little they generally appear to govern our external conduct, they always maintain their ground in the recesses of the mind. Few could have been bold enough to assert that the memorials of the past, and the alleged experience of the present, had no better foundation than the terrors and caprice of an over-heated imagination, or those illusions of the sense which owe their existence to disease or defective organization. Many must have retained a lurking conviction of the truth of their former belief; and, even where this was not the case, the weapon which had been so successfully wielded in crushing the rule of Wodan could only be exerted with diminished effect; since the same day, which heard the proofs of *his* identity with the Evil One, also witnessed the suppression of that ceremonial which alone ensured the permanency of the public faith. On the other hand, the superstitions of the forest, the mountain, or the domestic hearth, were attended with but few rites, and those of such a nature as to be easily concealed from the general eye. The divinities addressed were mostly local, either attached to particular places, persons, or things, and only petitioned or deprecated in matters of private interest. And however forcibly it might be urged that their interference in human affairs was only prompted by the machinations of Satan, yet as this was nothing better than a change of name in the cause, without denying the effect, and no equivalent agency was made to supply its place, these arguments only tended to corrupt without extirpating the obnoxious opinions. The consequence of

---

in all probability, coupled with the notion of Wodan's or Odin's psychopompic duties, that the Romans were induced to consider him as the same deity with their own Mercury. In an Etruscan patera, published by Winkelmann and afterwards by Lanzi, this god is seen weighing the souls of Memnon and Achilles; which would afford another reason for the supposed affinity. But the worship of Odin as supreme God, like that of Dionysus in his mysteries, and perhaps of Osiris (see Zoega *De Ufu Obeliscorum*), appears to have been a comparatively recent feature in the Northern creed. Thunaer, Thor, was the Thunderer, and held the same precedence in Norway, the last refuge of his worship, that he does in the Francic renunciation. The day consecrated by his name was also the Northern sabbath. There is so much affinity between some parts of the history of Odin, Dionysus, and Osiris, that the name of either might be substituted in the respective accounts of Snorro, and the several writers on Greek and *Ægyptian* mythology, without violating the general truth of the recital. [Vodden, *er ner Kaullum Opin.*"—Snorro's *Edda*, p. 6.]

such a temporizing system,—but which, with reference to the state of society that it was called upon to influence, contains more practical wisdom than it has usually received credit for,—was a gradual amalgamation of the ancient and established faith. In those documents approaching nearest to the era of a nation's conversion, such as the oldest Icelandic Sagas, we find the mention of these domestic deities attended with no diminution of their power, or derogation from their former rank. In later periods they are chiefly noticed to mark the malignancy of their disposition, or to ridicule their impotent pretensions; and occasionally they are brought forward to bear their reluctant testimony to the superiority of the dominant faith. From this source have emanated those recitals which exhibit to us either dwarfs or fairies expressing a desire of procuring the baptismal rite for their infant offspring, and those corruptions of a still later age, which represent their condition as only seemingly felicitous, and the joys and marvels of their subterranean abodes as the mere varnished exterior of misery and filth.<sup>1</sup> It is true, where the stream of tradition has continued pure, we still find them spoken of as the beneficent friends and protectors of mankind: as still in the enjoyment of their attributes and pleasures, their gardens of ever-blooming verdure, their adamantine palaces, their feasts, their revelry, their super-earthly and entrancing music. The Gael indeed has condemned his Daoine Shi' to the hollow mockery of these delights; but the Cymry, more faithful to the tenets of his ancestors, believes his Tylwyth Têg to be in the continuance of their former rights and happiness, which the folly alone of the human race has deprived the present generation from sharing in.<sup>2</sup>

There will be no necessity for entering minutely into those embellishments of popular fiction which owe their existence to a general belief in the powers of magic, fortilege, and divination.<sup>3</sup> The con-

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps to these ought to be added "the paying the kane to hell;" but if, as it is believed, the whole fairy system be but another name for the ancient demonology, the fine may be explained upon other principles. The same argument will then apply to the declaration of the Northumbrian dwarf, who hoped for an ultimate though remote salvation. See notes to the *Lady of the Lake*. The better portion of the ancient demons were souls in a progressive advancement towards perfection, and on their return to their celestial birth-place.

<sup>2</sup> See Grahame's *Sketches*, &c. quoted in the notes to the *Lady of the Lake*, and Davies's *Celtic Mythology*, p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> It may be right to caution the reader against a very common error, in which the motives that gave rise to the practice of magic and divination have been confounded with the criminal abuses that sprang from their use in later times. Poor human nature has frailties enough to answer for, without ascribing to its "malignity" the invention of magic rites and ceremonies. Nothing can be more clear, in this important chapter of the history of the human mind, than that the invocation and the charm have regularly descended from the exploded liturgies of the temple; and that the discarded mantle of infant science has "rested on" the wizard and the crone. The beldame who mutters the spell over the bruise or the wound only practises the same honourable "craft" which proved the divine descent of the Aesclepiades; and the cattle-spayer of Finland publicly chaunts the Runic rhyme at the present day with the same assurance of its efficacy with which the *epode* was sung by the priests of Pergamus and Epidaurus. Comp. Pind. *Pyth.* iii. 91. These arts, like their

formity of practice between the ancient and modern world in their application of these several arts has been generally acknowledged, and no exclusive theory has obtained to account for the mode of their transmission. Warton indeed has observed that “the Runic (Northern) magic is more like that of Canidia in Horace, the Romantic resembles that of Armida in Tasso;” but this is an artificial distinction, which had no existence in the popular creed, however much it may seem to be authorized by the documents to which he has referred. The magic of the North (like the poetry in which it is found) may in a great degree be considered as only a genial reflex of the practices of daily life; since many of the records preserving it were written at a period when the charms to produce the surprising effects noticed by Warton might more or less be procured at every wizard's cell. The magic of romance with “the sublime solemnity of its necromantic machinery” was obviously a matter of only traditional belief. A few vain pretenders to superior intelligence in the art could alone have professed to accomplish its marvels,<sup>1</sup> or some equally silly boasters to have witnessed them, and, having sprung from the busy workings of the fancy in decorating the tamer elements of the popular faith, could have no other existence than in its own fictitious memorials. On this account it is of necessity wanting in all those poems which, like the early Icelandic songs, make the slightest pretensions to historical worth, and can only abound in such productions as either treat of subjects professedly mythological, or are the manifest creation of the writer's invention. An injudicious comparison of these very opposite kinds of composition has clearly led to the erroneous opinion offered by Warton; and it will be sufficient to remark, that the legitimate spell of “gramarye” is to be found in the *Odyssey*, the *Edda*, and the popular tale,<sup>2</sup> as well as in those romances which suggested the use of it to Tasso. If more

---

names, bore once a sacred character; and however much they may have been made to minister to the follies and vices of the multitude, in their decried and degraded state, they are clearly referable in their *origin* to one of the most exalted principles of our nature, or (to use the language of Prometheus) were first resorted to *διάφοροι μηδέ ίδων* (Æsch. P. V. v. 494). Their history may tend to confirm the axiom,—that the religious usages of one age often become the superstition of a succeeding one; but it will also teach the more consolatory doctrine, that the impulses of the human heart may be founded in error, without necessarily involving either malignity or crime.

Among these may be reckoned the mysterious personage who in the sixteenth century availed himself of a widely circulated tradition to excite the public attention, and to invest himself with the title Faustus junior: Sic enim titulum sibi convenientem formavit magister Georgius Sabellicus Faustus junior, fons necromanticorum, astrologus, magus secundus, chiromanticus, agromanticus, pyromanticus, et in hydra arte secundus. Mr. Gorres has given this passage from a letter of Trithemius, dated August 20, 1507. The venerable abbot, after noticing several of his idle boasts, proceeds: In ultima quoque hujus anni quadragesima venit Stauronesum (Creutznach), et simili stultitia gloriosus de se pollicebatur ingentia, dicens se in Alchemia omnium qui fuerint unquam esse perfectissimum, et scire atque posse quicquid homines optaverint. See Gorres *Volks-bücher*, p. 242.

<sup>1</sup> See the *Odys. xiii. 190.* Thor's adventures at Utgarda, *Dæmonsga*, 41, and Chaucer's *Frankelein's Tale*.

frequently resorted to in later compositions than in the earlier fictions, we must rather attribute this circumstance to the spirit of the times in which they were written, than to any want of faith in the auditors of a ruder age: the extravagant events of Beowulf's life might make many a bold romancer blush for the poverty of his imagination.

In referring to those various objects of inanimate nature whose marvellous attributes are usually classed among the chief attractions of romance, it will be equally unnecessary to enter largely into the question of their origin, as the recent labours of abler antiquaries<sup>1</sup> have clearly proved that we are not indebted to the middle ages for their first appearance in popular poetry. For every purpose of the present inquiry it will be sufficient to enumerate a few of the most important points of coincidence between the fictions of the ancient and modern world; and, in noticing some of the disguises under which a common idea has been made to pass from one narrative to another, to evince the fondness of popular taste for a constant recurrence of its favourite types. MM. Grimm have already shown that the fatal garment of Dejanira—and which by Euripides has been connected with a later fable—still lives in the German tale of Faithful John; and that no image is more common, or assumes a greater variety of forms, in the current fictions of their native country, than the insidious present sent by Vulcan to his mother Juno.<sup>2</sup>

Another favourite symbol, and [one] entering deeply into the decorations of romance, is the talisman of virtue, by which the frailties of either sex were exposed to public detection; which Mr. Dunlop, with his accustomed accuracy, has referred to the trial at the Stygian fountain, and traced through the Greek romances of chivalry and the pages of Ariosto. In the prose romance of Tristram, whence the poet of Ferrara most probably borrowed it, the ordeal consists in quaffing the beverage of a drinking-horn, which no sooner approaches the culprit's lips than the contents are wasted over his person. In Perceforest and in Amadis, a garland and rose, which “bloom on the head of her who is faithful, and fade upon the brow of the inconstant,” are the proofs of the appellant's purity: [a similar idea occurs in the tale of the *Wright's Chaste Wife*:] and in the ballad, published by Dr. Percy, of the Boy and the Mantle where the same test is introduced, the minstrel poet has adhered to the traditions of Wales, which attribute a similar power to the mantle, the knife, and the goblet of Tegau Euroron, the chaste and lovely bride of Caradoc with the strong arm.<sup>3</sup> From hence it may have been transferred to the girdle of Florimel, in the *Fairy Queen*; while Albertus Magnus, in affirming that “a magnet placed beneath the pillow of an incontinent woman will infallibly eject her from her bed,” has preserved

<sup>1</sup> See the preface and notes to the *Kinder-und Haus-Märchen* of MM. Grimm; and a valuable essay on the same subject [? by Sir F. Palgrave] contained in the *Quarterly Review*, No. xxxvii.

<sup>2</sup> *Kinder-und Haus-Märchen*, vol. iii. p. 19 and 149.

<sup>3</sup> Jones's *Bardic Museum*, p. 60; whence all the subsequent notices of British marvel have been taken.

to us the vulgar, and perhaps the earliest, belief on the subject.<sup>1</sup> The glass of Agrippa which, till our own times, played a distinguished part in the history of the gallant Surrey, has been recently made familiar to the reader's acquaintance by the German story of Snowdrop.<sup>2</sup> But this, in all probability, has only descended to us from a mirror preserved near the temple of Ceres at Patras, or one less artificially constructed, though more miraculously gifted, a well near the oracle of Apollo Thurxis, in Lycia.<sup>3</sup> The zone of Hippolyte,<sup>4</sup> which gave a supernatural vigour to the "thews and limbs" of the wearer, is not to be distinguished from the girdle of the Norwegian Thor; and there can be little doubt that the brisingamen of Freyia, which graced the person of the same pugnacious deity on his visit to Thrymheim,<sup>5</sup> is the cestus of Venus under another name and form. Without possessing either the ægis-hialmr of the Edda, or the ægis of Minerva, it might be dangerous to assert that these petrifying objects are verbally identical; since nothing short of their terrific power would be a sufficient protection against the host of Hellenic philologists, whom such a declaration would infallibly call to arms.<sup>6</sup> In obedience, therefore, to the dictates of "the better part of valour," it will be most prudent to remark, that they strikingly agree in their appalling attributes, and that the thunderer of Norway was as efficiently armed for combat as his brother of Olympus. This ægis-hialmr is affirmed to have been the crafty workmanship of the dwarfs, the reputed authors of every "cunning instrument" in Northern

<sup>1</sup> This power is given to the magnet in the Orphic poem on Stones, v. 314, &c.

<sup>2</sup> See the *German Tales* from the *Kinder- und Haus-Märchen* of MM. Grimm, p. 133. It is to be hoped that the ingenious translators of this collection will continue their labours. The nature of their plan seems to have excluded many of the tales most interesting to an antiquary: but a supplementary volume, containing some of these, accompanied with that illustration which the translators appear so well able to supply, would greatly increase our obligation to them. [A second series was given in 1826.]

<sup>3</sup> See Pausanias, vii. 21. The former only exhibited the person and condition of health of the party inquired after; the latter displayed whatever was desired.

<sup>4</sup> Εἰχε δὲ ἴστροντα τὸν Αἴρος ζωστῆρα, σύμβολον τοῦ περιπτερίου ἀστροῦ. Apollod. *Bibl.* ii. 5, 9. In Parseee lore the girdle was a symbol of power over Ahriman. In the *Little Rose-garden*, the belt of Thor has descended to King Laurin. Weber, p. 153. The ring given by the lady Similt to her brother Dietlieb also ensured victory to him who wore it. *Ib.* p. 164.

<sup>5</sup> See Sæmund's *Edda*, *Thryms-Quida*.

<sup>6</sup> *Alyte* may have meant a breast-plate or helmet made of goat-skin, just as *zurna* meant a skull-cap or helmet made of dog-skin; but the fable on which the Greek grammarians have accounted for the application of the term to the armour of Jupiter and his daughter is an idle fabrication. The qualities of this weapon undoubtedly had some connection with its name:

ἀλυτός δ' αρ' ἄματος βάλτε' αλυτός θυσανάστας

δύνατος δέ περι μεν πανθή φόβος επεγέναντο. *Il. v. 738.*

The verb *ἀλυτεῖ*, from whence this term takes its derivation, meant—to move rapidly, to be violently agitated; and hence *alyte*, the tempestuous wind, and *alix*, the appellation given to the stormy Capella, or the star whose rising was productive of hurricanes. The ægis-bearing Jupiter of Virgil is the cloud-compeller—nimboisque ciceret, *Aen.* xiii. 354. For the same reason, and not from his goatish form, we may be assured the god of Arcadia, the author of the Panic terror, was called *Ægipan*. In Icelandic "ægir" means the stormy sea; and in Anglo-Saxon we have "egian" to excite, "eg-stream" a torrent, "ege" fear, and "egeian" to scare.

fiction ; and who manufactured for An the Bow-swing and Orvar Odd those highly-tempered arrows which, like the fabled dart of Procris, never missed their object, and having inflicted a mortal wound, returned to the bowstring which had emitted them.<sup>1</sup> Another specimen of their ingenuity is the ship of Freyr, called Skidbladnir, which, though sufficiently spacious to contain the whole tribe of the Asæ, with their arms and equipments, was yet so artfully contrived, that it might be folded like a handkerchief and carried about in the pocket.<sup>2</sup> The sails of this extraordinary vessel were no sooner hoisted than a favourable wind sprang up, an attribute which has descended to another ornament of Icelandic fable, the bark Ellide ; but this, like the first and oftener fung of ancient ships, was also gifted with the power of understanding human speech.<sup>3</sup> Homer, however, has told us, that the fleets of Alcinous combined the advantage of the favouring gale with an intelligence which enabled them to divine the wishes of those they bore, and that they also had the power of reaching their destined port without the assistance of a helmsman or a guide :

So shalt thou instant reach the realm affign'd,  
In wondrous ships, self-moved, instinct with mind :  
No helm secures their course, no pilot guides ;  
Like men intelligent, they plough the tides ;  
Conficous of every coast and every bay  
That lies beneath the sun's alluring ray.

In other fictions common to the ancient and modern world, this idea has been improved on, and applied to a vast variety of objects for conveying the person from place to place. Herodotus, with his characteristic love of the marvellous (tempered as this passion was by an unrivalled perception of the truth), found it impossible to pass unnoticed the fable of Abaris and his dart.<sup>4</sup> He has, however, only mentioned the common tradition of his day, that it transported the Hyperborean philosopher wherever he wished, and left to Jamblichus the further particulars of its history. From the Pythagorean romance of this writer we learn that Abaris had procured it in the temple of the Hyperborean Apollo, and that in addition to the services it had rendered him in his several journeys "by flood and field," it had assisted him in performing lustrations, expelling pestilences, and allaying the fury of the winds.<sup>5</sup> The place of its deposit clearly shows it to have been the same miraculous weapon employed by the Delian god in destroying the Cyclopes ; for another authority informs us he buried this fatal dart in an Hyperborean mountain, and that when banished from Olympus it was daily borne to him on the winds, laden with all the fruits of the season.<sup>6</sup> In this latter attribute it becomes identified with the horn of Amaltheæ, and serves to explain the mystery overlooked by Jamblichus, how Abaris, like

<sup>1</sup> Compare Muller's *Saga-Bibliothek*, pp. 532-41, with Hyginus, ed. Staveren, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> Edda of Snorro, *Dæmefaga* 37.

<sup>3</sup> Muller's *Saga-Bibliothek*, vol. ii. pp. 459 and 592.

<sup>4</sup> Jamblichus, *Vit. Pythag.* c. 19. 28.

<sup>5</sup> Melpom. c. 36.

<sup>6</sup> Hyginus, *Afros.* c. 15.

another Epimenides, might devote his time to the service of the gods, and yet never be seen to eat or drink. In the traditions of Wales, this dart has been accommodated to the more stately fashions of later times; and one of the thirteen marvellous productions of Britain is the car of Morgan, which carried the possessor to whatever district he desired. But here again we have only another form for the *talaria* of the nymphs, with which Perseus winged his way to the residence of Medusa; or the ring in the German tale, the King of the Golden Mountain,—while in the popular story of Fortunatus it assumes the humbler guise of a wishing-cap, and in the relations of the Kurds and the history of Tom Thumb it has descended to the lowly shape of a pair of seven-leagued boots. Another object enumerated among the thirteen marvellous productions of Britain is the veil or mask of Arthur, which had the power of rendering the wearer's person invisible, without interrupting his view of the things around him. In other fables of the same country this property is also given to the ring of Eluned,<sup>1</sup> the Lunet of the old English romance of *Ywaine and Gavaine*: and in several German tales the hero is made to conceal himself from the "ken" of his companions by the assistance of an enchanted cloak. The romance of King Laurin, and the far-famed Nibelungen-lied, follow the general traditions of the North, which confine this mysterious attribute to a nebel-kappe, or fog-cap. But however varied the objects to which this quality has been assigned, we cannot fail to recognise the same common property which distinguished the helm of Pluto, worn by Perseus in his combat with Medusa, or the equally notorious ring of Gyges, whose history has been recorded by Plato.<sup>2</sup> Without detaining the reader to trace the lyre of Hellenic fable through the hands of its several possessors, from Mercury to Amphion—

Dicitus et Amphion, Thebana conditor arcis  
Saxa mouere fono teftudinis, et prece blanda  
Ducere quo vellet—<sup>3</sup>

we may proceed to remark, that the earliest notice of its occurrence in Northern fiction is to be found in the mythology of Finland. Wainämöinen, the supreme god of the Finnish Olympus, was the inventor of a stringed instrument called the kandele which, resem-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Jones calls Eluned the lover of Owain; which, if correct, would justify a conclusion that the Welsh and English romances follow a different tradition. In the Heldenbuch this ring is given to Otnit by his mother. Weber, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> *De Repub.* iii. p. 359. Plato has most vexatiously dismissed a part of the history of this ring with a *καὶ . . . ἀλλα τι δὲ ἡ μυθολογῶσι*, little thinking that the modern antiquary would have been more beholden to him for information on this head than for all the subtleties of the Cratylus or the speculations of the Parmenides. Eucrates, in Lucian's *Philopœudes*, unblushingly affirms that he had one of these rings in his possession, and had used it on a very trying occasion. The ancients explained the helm of Pluto to be an impervious cloud surrounding the person of the wearer (such no doubt as is described in the *Little Garden of Roses*): but the passage in which this illustration is given cannot be more specifically referred to than by citing the Scholia to Plato published by Rühnken, [1798].

<sup>3</sup> Hor. *Ar. Poet.* v. 393.

bling a kit in its construction, is still played as a guitar. "When this beneficent deity presented the result of his labours to mankind, no mortal hand possessed the skill to awake its harmonies, till the god himself touching the strings, and accompanying its notes with his voice, caused the birds in the air, the beasts of the field, and the fishes of the sea to listen attentively to the strain, and even Wäinämöinen was moved to tears, which fell like pearls adown his robe."<sup>1</sup> This account, which is literally copied from Finnish tradition, will lose nothing by a comparison with the Grecian fable of Orpheus, and will recall to the reader's memory the celebrated gem representing Pan, the Grecian Wäinämöinen, playing upon his pipe in the centre of the ecliptic. The fictions of our own country, or, more correctly speaking, those of Scotland and Wales, have substituted the harp, as a more decidedly national instrument, for the lyre and kandele, and bestowed it upon two native musicians, Glaskyrion and Glenkindie, if indeed we are justified in separating these persons.<sup>2</sup> The former is the hero of a well-known ballad in Dr. Percy's *Reliques*,<sup>3</sup> and is placed by Chaucer, in his *House of Fame*, in the same rank of eminence with the son of Calliope :

There herde I play on a harpe,  
That sowned both well and sharpe,  
Hym Orpheus full craftily ;  
And on this fide fast by,  
Sate the harper Orion (Arion)  
And Eacides, Chirion,  
And other harpers many one,  
And the Briton Glaskyrion.

The powers of Glenkindie's harp exceed all that has been said of its rival instruments :

He'd harpit a fish out o' fuit water,  
Or water out o' a stane,

<sup>1</sup> Mone's continuation of Creutzer, i. p. 54. But this tradition appears to have found its way into Scotland. In a singular composition, published by Sir Walter Scott, *An interlude on the laying of a Gaif*, we find the following allusion to it :

"And sune Mareit the gaift the sic,  
And cround him king of *Kandele* ;  
And they gat them betwene  
Orpheus king and Elpha quene."—*Minstrelsy*, vol. i. p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Jamieson seems to consider Glenkindie a corruption of some local name, which has been substituted for Glaskyrion. There can be no doubt but the ballad published by him, as well as that in Dr. Percy's collection, refers to the same personage ; but who this celebrated harper may have been, whether a native of Wales, Scotland, or any other country, is not so clear. The same rationale will also apply to the name. It is to be regretted that a gentleman so eminently qualified as Mr. Jamieson to illustrate the popular antiquities of his native country should have abandoned a career in which he has already attained so much distinction, and might have acquired still greater. His name must ever be held in estimation by the friends of Warton's fame, for the spirited manner in which he shook off the trammels of the Ritsonian school in his first publication, and vindicated the tasteful labours of Warton and Dr. Percy. [Few persons will probably be found ready at the present time to endorse Mr. Price's opinion of Jamieson.]

<sup>3</sup> Vol. iii. p. 84 [edit. 1812, or *Bishop Percy's folio MS.* edit. Furnivall and Hales, i. 246].

Or milk out o' a maiden's breast,  
That bairn had never nane.<sup>1</sup>

From hence the transition to the horn of Oberon, “which if softly founded would make every one dance who was not of an irreproachable character;” or the harp of Sigurd,<sup>2</sup> which caused inanimate objects to caper in the wildest confusion, was but an easy step. In popular story the same qualities have been conferred upon the fiddle of the German tale *The Jew in the Bush*, and the pipe of Jack in *The mery Geste of the Frere and the Boye*, and have thus developed the opposite and contrasting elements contained in this as in every other fable, and without which no mythos seems to be complete.

A still more favourite ornament of popular fiction is the highly-gifted object, of whatever form or name, which is to supply the fortunate owner with the gratification of some particular wish, or to furnish him with the golden means of satisfying every want. In British fable this property has been given to the dish or napkin of Rhydderch the Scholar which, like the table or table-cloth introduced into a variety of German tales, no sooner received its master's commands than it became covered with a sumptuous banquet. The counterpart of Rhydderch's dish is to be found in another British marvel, the horn of Bran, which spontaneously produced whatever liquor was called for: and a repetition of the same idea occurs in the goblet given by Oberon to Huon of Bourdeaux, which in the hands of a good man became filled with the most costly wine. In Fortunatus, and those tales which are either imitations of his adventures or copied from a common original, an inexhaustible purse is made to meet the demands of every occasion; while in others a bird, a tree, and even the human person, are made to generate in the same miraculous manner a daily provision of gold.<sup>3</sup> A modification of the same idea is also found in the basket of Gwyddno, which no sooner received a deposit of food for one than the gift became multiplied into a supply for a hundred; or in those stories where the charity bestowed upon the houseless wanderer is rewarded by an endless stock of some requisite article of subsistence.<sup>4</sup> In Hellenic

<sup>1</sup> Jamieson's *Scottish Ballads*, vol. i. p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> Herraud of Bosa's Saga, p. 49-51. The pipes of Dorco and Daphnis, in the pastoral romance of Longus, seem to have had much the same effect upon their respective flocks. See pp. 25, 111, 112 (ed. Villoison). The pipe of Pan, in the same romance, equals anything recorded of its modern parallels.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Gorres has observed, in speaking of Fortunatus, that the story of the goose which laid a golden egg is only a variation of this prolific subject; and that the history of the world contains little more than a kind of Argonautic expedition after the same golden fleece. For the other particulars referred to in the text, see *Kinder- und Haus-Märchen*, No. 60, 122, 130.

<sup>4</sup> See *Der Arme und der Reiche*, in MM. Grimm's collection. The note on this story contains references to the same idea in the fictions of Greece, China, and India. It seems to have escaped these learned German antiquaries that a much earlier notice of the same miraculous agency is to be found in the “widow's curse” of the Old Testament, 2 Kings, chap. iv.

fable, we have already seen the dart of Apollo enabling Abaris to live without appearing to partake of sustenance ; and the narrative of Cleombrotus, also noticed before, seems to imply some similar resource on the part of his Eastern traveller. Another mysterious personage of early Grecian fable, and whose goetic practices, like those of Abaris, have secured for him a dubious fame, is Epimenides the Cretan. Of him we are also told that he was never known to eat, but that he allayed his hunger by occasionally tasting a precious edible bestowed upon him by the Nymphs ; and which he carefully kept preserved in an ox's hoof.<sup>1</sup> The popular creed of Attica, which seems to have delighted in investing the Theban Hercules with much the same absurdities that Northern fable has gathered round the person of Thor, had recourse to a similar invention as the only appropriate means of appeasing this divinity's ravenous appetites. It has accordingly conferred upon him the horn of Amalthea, the fruit of his victory over the river-god Achelous ; and of which the earliest tradition on record has given the popular view of its powers, that it never failed to produce a constant store of food.<sup>2</sup> As such, it becomes identified with the Æthiopian table of the sun, mentioned by Herodotus ;<sup>3</sup> but in later fictions this idea has been refined into a horn, containing every possible delicacy of the vegetable kingdom, overflowing with all earthly good, and conferring wealth and prosperity upon every one who might chance to possess it.<sup>4</sup>

This necessarily brings us to the history of the holy Graal,<sup>5</sup> or a

<sup>1</sup> See Diogenes Laertius, ed. Menage, vol. i. p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> See Eutath. ad Dionys. Perieg. v. 433, and Pherecydes in Apollod. *Bibl.* ii. 7, 5.

<sup>3</sup> See Herod. iii. 18. Mela, c. 10 (quæ passim apposita sunt, affirmant innasci subinde divinitus) ; and Solinus, c. 30.

<sup>4</sup> See the Scholiast to Lucian's *Rhet. Precept.*, and Eustathius, as before. The "Navigium" of the same writer contains some curious allusions to different points of popular belief, and which may be compared with the subjects treated of in the text. One of the parties wishes for a set of rings to endow him with the following qualities and advantages : a never-failing store of health ; a person invulnerable, inviolable, of irresistible charms, and having the concentrated strength of 10,000 men ; a power of flying through the air, of entering every dwelling-house strongly secured, and of casting a deep sleep upon whom he chose. Another person in the same piece asks for the wand of Mercury, which is to ensure him an inexhaustible supply of gold. For this wand of wealth and luck, see the *Homeric Hymn to Mercury*, v. 529 ; and compare Epict. *ap.* Arrian, *Diss.* iii. 20, p. 435, ed. Schweigh., where it is said to convert everything it touched into gold. This idea of its power found an early circulation in the North ; for one of the Glossaries published by Professor Nyerup, in his *Symbol Text*, and certainly not of a later date than the tenth century, translates caduceuma, *unshilicarta*. The *Vilkina Saga* mentions a ring which is to excite affection in the wearer towards the donor (Müller, p. 233), and the love-stone of Helen is well known. Servius (*ad Aen.* iii. 279), notices an ointment prepared by Venus which had similar powers. The Horned Siegfried becomes invulnerable by bathing in the blood of a slaughtered dragon ; and Medea gave Jason an ointment producing the same effect for the space of four-and-twenty hours. (Apollod. *Bibl.* i. 9, 23.) Orvar Odd had a kirtel which was to preserve him against death by fire or water, hunger or the sword, so long as he never turned his back upon a foe. Müller, 533.

<sup>5</sup> The connection between these symbols, a horn and a cup, will be apparent, on

sacred cup, which in the house of king Pecheur “appeareth daily at the hour of repast, in the hands of a lady, who carried it three times round the table, which was immediately replenished with all the delicacies the guests could desire.” The origin of this miraculous vessel, and the manner of its transmission to Europe are thus related by Robert Borron.<sup>1</sup> “The day on which the Saviour of the world suffered,

recollecting that the former was the most ancient species of drinking-vessel both among Greeks and Barbarians. See *Athen.* xi. c. 51. Xenophon also notices the application of horns to the same purpose among the Thracians. *Anab.* vii. 2. 23: and it will be needless to offer any examples from the well-known customs of Western Europe. It will also be evident why both these utensils should be chosen as the types of fecundity, abundance, and vivification, when we remember that both were the receptacles of that element, which was either the symbol of life, (Ὄντος τὸ ινὴν σύμβολον, Proclus in *Timaeum*, p. 318,) or the principal co-operating power in generation (οὐρανοῦ γὰρ γένεσιν . . . τὸ ιδεῖν. Porphyrius *de Antro Nymph.* c. 17.) Hence the cornucopia was bestowed upon all those deities who presided over fertility or human prosperity; upon Achelous and the Nile, Bonus Eventus and Annona, from their share in fostering the fruits of the earth; upon Tyche or Fortuna, the Agatho-dæmon, the tutelary Genii of towns or persons, (such as the Roman emperors,) the Lares, &c. from their beneficial aid in the direction of human affairs. A cornucopia of good fortune has already been noticed in the possession of the Northern elves or fays; and one of the nymphs in the celebrated relief of Callimachus leads the way with this identical symbol. On the same principle, we meet with a Demeter Poteriophorus, and a Rhea Craterophorus, the Bonæ Dææ and Magnæ Matres of the ancient world; and the modius of Serapis, the giver and the receiver, is clearly referable to the same source. (Serapidis capiti modius superpositus, quia indicet vitam mortalibus frugum largitate præberi. Rufinus *Hist. Eccles.* ii. 23.) For further illustration of this copious subject, see Mr. Creuzer's *Dionysus, sive Commentationes Academicae de Rerum Baccharum Orphicarumque Originibus et Causis*; Heidelberg, 1808.

<sup>1</sup> [Professor Pearson has almost identified Borron with an ancestor of Lord Byron. See *Saint Graal*, ed. Furnivall, 1863, 2.—F.] The Vatican manuscript, No. 1687, commences with these words, “Mefir Robert de Boron, qui cheste estore translata de Latine en Romance, par le commandement de sainte eglise;” and no one can for a moment doubt the influence of the Romish priesthood, in the peculiar colouring given to the narrative. Mr. Ritson has been a strenuous opponent of all such declarations as claim a Latin, Greek, or Arabic original for the subject-matter recorded. There may be occasional grounds for scepticism on this point; but the sweeping incredulity which rejects every assertion of the kind, is equally prejudicial to a right knowledge of the subject, with the easy faith it affects to despise. We know the mutations inflicted upon the “Seven Wise Masters” prior to its receiving an English dress; a variety of Italian tales and French fabliaux are of Arabic or Oriental origin; Greek fable must have been the immediate source of Alexander's story; the expedition of Attila, and *Amis and Amilon*, still exist in Latin verse; and “Walther [of Aquitain's] and Hildegund's flight from Attila was sung in Latin hexameters, on the model of Virgil and Lucan, by Eckhart, a priest of St. Galle (An. 973).” The Anglo-Saxon fragment of Judith was not taken directly from the Apocryphal narrative. The variations indeed from this document are, generally speaking, of such a kind as any translator might be supposed to indulge in, without our having recourse to another original. But in one passage we meet with a very distinct mention of a mosquito-net; an article of furniture not specified in the Book of Judith, which could not have been in use in these Northern realms, and of which the account must have travelled from the countries situated on the Mediterranean Sea. The original legend or romance must hence have been composed in a Southern dialect: and those who remember the alleged proficiency of the Anglo-Saxon monks in Greek may be induced to fix their election on that language. The immediate source, from whence the Scop derived his narrative, is of course beyond

death was destroyed, and our life restored : on that day there were few who believed on him ; but there was a knight named Joseph of Aritmathæa (a fine city in the land of Aromat). In this city Joseph was born, but had come to Jerusalem seven years before our Lord was crucified, and had embraced the Christian faith ; but did not dare to profess it for fear of the wicked Jews. He was full of wisdom, free from envy and pride, and charitable to the poor. This Joseph was at Jerusalem with his wife and son, who was also named Joseph. His father's family crossed the sea to that place which is now called England, but was then called Great Britain ; and crossed it 'sans aviron au pan de sa chemise.'<sup>1</sup> Joseph had been in the house where Jesus Christ took his last supper with his apostles ; he there found the plate off which the Son of God had eaten ; he possessed himself of it, carried it home, and made use of it to collect the blood which flowed from his side and his other wounds ; and this plate is called the Saint Graal.' This, however, is only the Breton or British account of the Saint Graal. The German romancers have followed a different version of its history, and derive their knowledge of the subject, though indirectly, from an Oriental source. The *Titurel* and *Parcifal* of Wolfram von Eschenbach<sup>2</sup> are respectively devoted to the discovery and the quest of this miraculous vessel : and in both we find a similar account of its powers to that given in the narrative of Robert Borron. The circumstances, however, and the agents which have been connected with it are wholly different from those contained in the rival version. The name of Arthur is more sparingly introduced than in the Western fiction ; and the theatre of its most important events is laid in either Asia or Africa. The immediate source of Eschenbach's poem was a Provençal romance written by one Kyot or Guiot. Of this writer nothing further appears to be known than the memorial of his labours preserved in the *Parcifal* of his German translator, and a notice of his strictures upon Chretien de Troyes<sup>3</sup>

our inquiry ; but such a fact will teach us circumspection in forming any general theory as to the transmission of romantic fictions. *Apollonius of Tyre*, another Greek romance, also exists in Anglo-Saxon prose, [which version was edited by Thorpe, 1834, 8vo.]

<sup>1</sup> This account has been extracted from a version of Borron's prologue, in the *British Bibliographer*, vol. i. [The allusion is to a very common miracle in Roman Catholic legends. When a saint wants to cross the water, he generally makes his cloak, or some similar garment, serve as a ferry-boat ; thus getting safely conveyed to his place of destination, without oar, sail, or rudder. The Portuguese missionary Gouvea gravely relates a like exploit of the Grand Lama, whom he calls the *bishop of Tibet*.—*Garnett*.]

<sup>2</sup> These notices of Eschenbach's poems have been collected from Mr. Görres' preface to *Lohengrin*, an old German romance, founded on the same fiction as the *Chevelere Affigne*. [See Mr. Edgar Taylor's *Lays of the Minnesingers*, 1825. Mr. R. Taylor observes : "An analysis of the story of *Parcifal* has been given in the *Bibliothèque Univ. de Genève*, for Sept. 1837, where the Saint Graal is said to have been "une pierre précieuse qui se détacha de la couronne de Satan, lorsqu'il fut précipité du ciel."]

<sup>3</sup> The language of Eschenbach is thus given by Mr. Görres from the printed edition of the *Parcifal* :

who, like most of the Norman troveurs, seems to have drawn his materials from an Armorican source. From Wolfram's poem we gather, that Master Kyot obtained his first knowledge of the Graal from a manuscript he discovered at Toledo. This volume was written in a heathen character, of which the troubadour was compelled to make himself master; and the baptismal rite enabled him to accomplish this arduous task without the aid of necromancy. The author of this mysterious record was a certain heathen astronomer, Flegetanis by name, who on the mother's side traced up his genealogy to King Solomon; but having a Saracen father, he had adhered to his paternal faith, and worshipped a calf. Flegetanis was deeply versed in all the motions of the heavenly bodies; and in the hallowed volume deposited at Toledo he had carefully inscribed the result of his nocturnal studies. But the book contained nothing more than the astronomer had really read most mysteriously depicted in the skies.<sup>1</sup> Even the name of the Graal was there emblazoned, together with the important fact, that a band of spirits had left it behind them upon earth as they winged their way to their celestial abodes.

The acquisition of this knowledge stimulated Kyot to further inquiries; and he proceeded to search in Latin books for the name of that people which had been considered worthy of guarding the Graal. He perused the chronicles of Brittany, France and Ireland without much success; but in the annals of Anjou he found the whole story recounted: he there read a complete history of Mazadan and his race: how Titurel brought the Graal to Amfortas, whose sister Herzelunde became the wife of Gamuret and the mother of Parcifal. This is clearly borrowed from the proheme of Kyot. Divested of its extraordinary colouring, we may receive it as amounting to this: that Kyot was indebted to an Arabic original for some of his details, and that the rest were collected from European records of the same fiction. The truth of this is supported by the internal evidence. The scene for the most part is not only laid in the East, but a large proportion of the names are of decidedly Oriental origin. The Saracens are always spoken of with consideration; Christian knights unhesitatingly enrol themselves under the banner of the Caliph; no trace of religious animosities is to be found between the followers of the Crescent and the Cross; and the Arabic appellations of the seven planets are thus distinctly enumerated: Zwal (Zuhael), Saturn; Musteri, Jupiter; Muret (Meryt),

---

“ Ob von Troys meister Christian,  
Diesem Maere hat Unrecht getan,  
Daz (des) mach wohl zurnen Kyot,  
Der unz die rechten Maere enbot.”

i. e. Since Master Christian of Troyes has done this tale an injustice, Kyot may well be angry, who has presented us with the right narrative.

<sup>1</sup> In the work already referred to, Mr. Görres has endeavoured to prove that Flegetanis must have had a Greek original before him. Of this, or at least of the adoption of Greek traditions, there is the most convincing proof in what is said of the alpis Eccidæmon and the fish Galeotes. The latter is intimately connected with the Northern fiction relative to the Nicors, so frequently mentioned in Beowulf.

Mars ; Samsi (Shems), the Sun ; Alligasir (the brilliant), Venus ; Kitr (Kedr, the obscure), Mercury ; Kamer (Kæmer), the Moon. Whether the name of Parcifal be taken from the Arabic Parfé or Parseh Fal, the pure or the poor dumpling, as conjectured by Mr. Görres, must be left to the decision of the Oriental scholar : but the narrative already given affords a strong corroboration of his opinion, that Flegetanis is a corruption of Felek-daneh, an astronomer.

The Breton and Provençal fictions, as we have seen, unite in bringing this mysterious vessel from the East, a quarter of the globe whose earliest records present us with a marvellous cup, as extraordinary in its powers as any thing attributed to the Graal. Such a cup is well known to have occupied a conspicuous place among the traditions of the Jews, and from the Patriarch Joseph,<sup>1</sup> the chaste and provident minister of Pharaoh, to have descended to the great object of Hebrew veneration and glory, the illustrious king Solomon.<sup>2</sup> It will, therefore, be no matter of surprise to those who remember the talismanic effect of a name in the general history of fiction, that a descendant of this distinguished sovereign should be found to write its history ; or that another Joseph should be made the instrument of conveying it to the kingdoms of Western Europe. In Persian fable, the same miraculous vessel has been bestowed upon the great Jemshid,<sup>3</sup> the pattern of perfect kings, in whose reign the

<sup>1</sup> Is not this it in which my lord drinketh ? And whereby indeed he *divineth* ? Gen. xliv. 5. In Norden's time the custom of divining by a cup was still continued. "Je fais," dit Baram Cashef de Derri au Juif, qui servoit d'entremetteur aux voyageurs Européens, "quelles gens vous etes ; j'ai consulté ma coupe, et j'y ai trouvé, que vous etiez ceux, dont un de nos prophètes a dit, qu'il viendroit des Francs travestis, qui feraient enfin venir un grand nombre d'autres Francs, qui ferroient la conquête du pays, et examineroient tout."—*Voyage d'Egypte et de Nubie*, iii. 68. The lecanomancy of the Greeks is well known.

<sup>2</sup> The *Clavicula Salomonis* contains a singular variation of this fiction. The supernatural knowledge of Solomon was recorded in a volume which Rehoboam inclosed in an ivory ewer, and deposited in his father's tomb. On repairing the royal sepulchre, some wise men of Babylon discovered the cup, and having extracted the volume, an angel revealed the key to its mysterious writing to one Troes a Greek : and hence the stream of occult science, which has so beneficially unfolded the destinies of the West. A parallel fable is found in Messenian story. When the Lacedæmonians stormed the fortres on Mount Ira, Aristomenes, warned by the Delphic oracle, secreted in the earth some unknown article, which was to be a future talisman of security to his unfortunate countrymen. After the battle of Leuctra, the Argive commander Epiteles was directed in a dream to exhume this mysterious deposit. It was then discovered to be a brazen ewer, containing a roll of finely beaten tin, on which were inscribed the mysteries of the great divinites. (τὸν μετάλλον θεῖν . . . ἡ τάσθη. Paus. iv. c. 20, 26.)

<sup>3</sup> "Giam en Perse signifie une *coupe* ou verre à boire et un *miror*. Les Orientaux, qui fabriquent cette espèce de vases ou ustensiles de toutes sortes des metaux aussi bien que de verre ou de crystal, et en plusieurs figures différentes, mais qui approchent toutes de sphérique, donnent aussi ce nom à un globe céleste. Ils disent, que l'ancien roi Gianschid, qui est le Salomon des Perses, et Alexandre le Grand, avoient de ces coupes, globes, ou miroirs, par le moyen desquels ils connoissoient toutes les choses naturelles, et quelquefois même les surnaturelles. La coupe qui servoit à Joseph le Patriarche pour deviner, et celle de Nestor dans Homère, où toute la nature étoit représentée symboliquement, ont pu fournir aux Orientaux le

golden age was realized in Iran, and under whose mild and benevolent sway it became a land of undisturbed felicity. On digging the foundations of Estakar (Persepolis), this favourite of Ormuzd, and his legitimate representative upon earth, discovered the goblet of the Sun ; and hence the cause of all those blessings which attended his prosperous reign, and his unbounded knowledge of both terrestrial and celestial affairs. From the founder of the Persian monarchy it passed into the hands of Alexander the Great,<sup>1</sup> the hero of all later Oriental fiction ; and Ferdusi introduces the Macedonian conqueror addressing this sacred cup as “the ruling prince of the heavenly bodies, and as the auspicious emblem of his victorious career.” By other Eastern poets it had been referred to as a symbol of the world, and the fecundating powers of nature ; while others again have considered it as the source of all true divination and augury, of the mysterious arts of chemistry, and the genuine philosopher's stone.<sup>2</sup> A goblet of the Sun also forms a favourite object in Grecian fable.<sup>3</sup> On approaching the shores of the Western Ocean, this divinity was supposed to abandon his chariot, and placing himself in a cup, to be borne through the centre of the earth. Having visited (according to Stesichorus) his mother, wife and children, he then proceeded to the opposite point of the hemisphere, where another car awaited his arrival, with which he resumed his diurnal course. The Theban Hercules, the original type of all erratic champions, once ventured to attack the son of Hyperion ; but on being reproved for his temerity he withheld his hand, and received as a reward for his obedience the golden chalice of the god. This he now ascended ; and during a furious storm, excited for the purpose of putting his courage to the test, he traversed the ocean in it till he reached the western island of Erythæa.<sup>4</sup> The Platonists have dwelt at large upon Hercules thus

sujet de cette fiction. Un poete Turc dit, Lorsque j'aurai été éclairé des lumières du ciel, mon ame deviendra le miroir du monde, dans lequel je decouvrail les secrets les plus cachés.” Herbelot, *Biblioth. Orient.* f. v. Giam.

<sup>1</sup> “Quum Alexander pervenisset in palatum suum, gyrandes exierunt Graeci locis suis, et leti non viderunt noctem regis, (viderunt autem) quatuor pocula. Gyrandibus ita locutus est (Alexander) : Salvi estote, lætamini hoc fausto omne nostro : hic enim scyphus in pugna est falso nostra, princeps siderum est in potestate nostra.” Shahnameh, as quoted in Wilkins's *Persean Chrestomathia*, p. 171, and Creuzer's *Dionysius*, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> In the article already referred to, Herbelot says, The Persian poets make of this cup, “tantot le symbole de la nature et du monde, tantot celui du vin, quelquefois celui de la divination et des augures, et enfin de la chymie, et de la pierre philosophale.”

<sup>3</sup> See the fragments of this mythos, as variously related in Athenæus, lib. xi. pp. 469-70. Minnermus calls it the couch of the Sun, in allusion, as Athenæus observes, to the concave form of the cup. This seems to have been a common metonymy ; for in the passage already cited from Pausanias, the brazen ewer deposited by Aristomenes is termed a brazen bed by the old man who appeared to Epiteles in his dream.

<sup>4</sup> From the Grecian terminology of their drinking-vessels, it is clear that a cup and a ship were originally correlative ideas ; and the catalogue of Athenæus (lib. xi.) recites several words indiscriminately implying either the one or the other. The twofold import of these terms will tend to explain an apparent deviation, on the

completing his labours in the West; and, connecting this circumstance with the fancied position of the islands of the blest, have implied that it was here he overcame the vain illusions of a terrestrial life, and that henceforth he resided in the realms of truth and eternal light. With them, as in the school from whence their leading dogmas were derived—the mysteries of Paganism—a cup is the constant symbol of “vivific power,” and this goblet of the Sun becomes the same type of regeneration and a return to a better life with the Graal of romantic fiction. Another version of the contest between Hercules and the Sun, or Apollo, transfers the scene of action to Delphi, and makes the object of strife between these heaven-born kinsmen the celebrated tripod of the oracle. But in the symbolical language of Greece, a tripod and a goblet (crater) were synonymous terms:<sup>1</sup> and the grammarians have informed us, that from this combat between the brothers and their subsequent reconciliation arose the prophetic powers of Hercules. It will however be remembered that the translators of the Septuagint, in their version of the Hebrew text, have rendered the divining cup of Joseph by the Greek term “Condy.” Of this vessel Athenæus has preferred the following account from Nicomachus. “The name of this cup is Persian. It originally meant the celestial lantern of Hermes, which in form resembled the world, and was at once the source of the

part of the Greeks and Romans, from the general type adopted by other nations in the form of their receptacles for the dead. The vase or urn of the former, the larnax of Egypt, the ship or boat of Western Europe, and the canoe of the American savage, are all connected with the same primitive idea expressed in the Welsh apophthegm: “Pawb a ddaw i'r Ddavar Long—Every one will come into the ship of the earth.” By whatever steps the Greek proceeded from his simple bowl or boat to all the luxury of form displayed in his cineræal urns, the larnax, ship, or coffin of other nations was by no means a needless accommodation to the doctrine, which forbade the incremation of the dead. The ashes of Baldr (*Dæmeseaga*, c. 43) were deposited in the ship Hringhorne, the body of Scyld (*Beowulf*, c. 1) in a bark laden with arms and raiment, and committed to the guidance of the ocean. The varying language of the *Iliad* seems to countenance a similar distinction between Greek and Phrygian rites. The ashes of Patroclus are consigned to a golden cup (*ἰε χρυσίν φάλαρη*, xxiii. 253); those of Hector to a golden ark or coffer (*χρυσίν ιε λέρνατα*, xxiv. 795. Compare Thucydides, ii. 34; for it is by no means clear that the latter term ever implied an urn, however much such an interpretation might be justified by analogy. We are not, however, to infer, that either of these utensils was the emblem of death or annihilation, or that this application to funeral purposes was in any way at variance with the Platonic doctrine of the text. For as the cup or vase was the symbol of vivific power, of generation, or an earthly existence, so also it was the type of regeneration, or a continued life in a happier and more exalted state. The savage is buried in his canoe, that he may be conveyed to the residence of departed souls; the Greek was taught in the mysteries that the Dionysiac vase would be a passport to the Elysian fields; and the religion of Egypt enjoined, that every worshipper of Osiris should appear before his subterranean judge in the same kind of receptacle as that which had inclosed the mortal frame of this divinity. It only remains to observe that a boat of glass was the symbol of initiation into the Druidical mysteries. Davies's *Celtic Mythology*, p. 211.

<sup>1</sup> Καὶ τὸ πεπτίριον ἦ Διονύσων, τρίποντα . . . δεῖ δὲ τοῦ τρίποντος τῶν Διονύσων, τὸν κρατῆρα. Athenæus, ii. 143.

divine marvels, and all the fruits that abound upon earth. On this account it is used in libations.”<sup>1</sup> The reader of Plato will have no difficulty in connecting this mundane cup with the first crater, in which the Demiurgus of the universe mixed the materials of his future creation; in which the soul of the world was tempered to its due consistency, and from whence the souls that animate corporeal substances were dispersed among the stars.<sup>2</sup> The mention of this primary bowl gave rise among the Platonists to a second or distributive cup of souls, which they bestowed upon Dionysus, as lord of the sensitive universe; and hence the nymphs, as ministrants and followers of this divinity, as the authorized inspectors of generation, were said to be supplied with the same symbol. According to some authorities, these goblets are placed at opposite points of the firmament, and are respectively the types of generation, or the soul’s descent into this realm of sensual pleasure, and of palingenesy, or the soul’s return to those celestial regions from whence it sprang.<sup>3</sup> The former stands between the signs of Cancer and Leo, immediately before the human portal; and a draught of the oblivious beverage it contains occasions forgetfulness of those pure delights in which the soul had previously lived, and excites a turbulent propensity towards a material and earthly existence.<sup>4</sup> The latter is placed at

<sup>1</sup> *Athenaeus*, xi. 478. The present version is founded on the correction of Mr. Creuzer, who has at length rendered this passage intelligible by reading “*εμπού λρω*,” where both Casaubon and Schweighäuser have “*εμπούρω*.” The latter critic has acknowledged the advantage of this emendation. See *Dionysius*, &c. p. 26 *et seq.* Nicomachus has used the term applied by Plato (*Leg.* i. 644) to the whole animal creation, “*τὸν θεῖον τὰ θαύματα*.”

<sup>2</sup> *Timaeus*, 41, 42.

<sup>3</sup> See Mr. Creuzer’s *Symbolik*, &c. vol. iii. 410, &c. who has collected the scattered notices of Proclus and Plotinus on the subject. Compare also Porphyry’s interesting tract *De Antro Nymphaeum*, and Macrobius’s *Somnium Scipionis*.

<sup>4</sup> See Macrobius, *S. Scip.* i. c. 12. The cauldron of Ceridwen, if founded on a *genuine* record, appears to occupy the same place in Celtic mythology. (See the Hanes Taliesin in Mr. Davies’s *Celtic Mythology*.) Ceridwen, we are told, was “the goddess of various seeds,” from whose cauldron was derived every thing sacred, pure and primitive. Gwyon the Little sits watching the cauldron of inspiration, till three drops of the precious compound alight on his finger. On tasting these, every event of futurity becomes unfolded to his view. This appears to be the “*novum potum materialis alluvionis*,” the intoxicating draught which inspires the soul with an irresistible propensity to a corporeal existence. “*Hæc est autem hyle, que omne corpus mundi quod ubicumque cernimus ideis impressa formavit.*” (Macrobi. i. 12.) It is this which protrudes the soul into Leo, and furnishes it with a prescience of its future career, (“*cum vero ad Leonem labendo pervenerit, illuc conditionis futuræ ausplicantur exordium.*” *Ib.*) Gwyon is now pursued by Ceridwen, and transforms himself successively into a hare, a fish, and a bird, while the goddess becomes a greyhound-bitch, an otter, and a sparrow-hawk. Despairing of escape he assumes the form of a grain of wheat, and is swallowed by Ceridwen in the shape of a black high-crested hen. Ceridwen becomes pregnant, and at the expiration of nine months brings forth Taliesin, whom she exposes in a boat or coracle. In this we appear to have the soul’s progression through the various elements which supply it with the vehicles necessary for incorporation. “*Tertius vero elementorum ordo, ita ad nos conversus, habeatur, ut terram ultimam faciat, et cæteris in medium redactis in terram definat, tam ima quam summa postremitas: igitur sphæra Martis ignis habeatur, aer Jovis, Saturni aqua, terra vero Aplanes, in*

one extremity of the table of the gods (the milky way). It is held by Ganymede or Aquarius, the guardian of the southern fishes (king Pecheur ?); and it is only by a favourable lot from this urn of destiny that the soul is enabled to find a passage through the portal of the gods (Capricorn) to the circle of eternal felicity.

The sacred vessel of modern fiction is no less distinguished for its attributes. The seat reserved for it at the Round Table was called "the siege perilous," of which a hermit had declared: "There shall never none fit in that siege but one, but if he be destroyed," [and that one] "shall win the Sancgreall."<sup>1</sup> On the day this seat was to receive its appointed tenant, two inscriptions were found miraculously traced upon it: "Four hundred winters and four and fifty accomplished after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ ought the siege to be fulfilled:" and, "This is the siege of Sir Galahad the good knight." The healing virtues of the Graal are exemplified on the wounded persons of Sir Bors and Sir Percival,<sup>2</sup> two of the knights destined to accomplish the Quest. A cripple of ten years' suffering is restored to health by touching the table on which it is borne; and

---

qua Elysios campos esse puris animis deputatos antiquitas nobis intelligendum reliquit: de his campis anima, cum in corpus emititur, per tres dementorum ordines, trina morte ad corpus usque descendit." (Ib.) The *pursuit* of Ceridwen would then be a personification of that necessity by which souls are compelled to descend, in order that the economy of the universe may be sustained. "For the sensitive life suffers from the external bodies of fire and air, earth and water falling upon it; and considering all the passions as mighty through the vileness of its life, is the cause of tumult to the soul." Procl. in *Tim.* as cited by Mr. Taylor. Another favourite figure of the faune school is, that the soul is hurled like seed into the realms of generation. *Ib.* 510. The remainder of the tale is a piece of common mythology. Mr. Davies admits that the bardic lore was a compound of Pagan and Christian dogmas; and it therefore becomes a question, whether this Paganism was purely Druidical, or that syncretic system adopted by Pelagius from the Platonizing fathers of the Eastern Church. The theological tenets of the triads (Williams's *Poems*, vol. ii.) are obviously derived from this source.

<sup>1</sup> *Morte Arthur*, P. iii. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> On this occasion Sir Percival "had a glimmering of that vessel, and of the maiden that bore it; for he was perfect and clene." (*M. Arth.* c. 14.) And again: "I wot wele what it is. It is an holy vessel that is borne by a maiden, and thereon is a part of the holy blood of our blessed Saviour." *Ib.* There is no clue in the romance to the genealogy of this damsel. But Mr. Creuzer has shown that "a perfect and clean maiden" who bore a holy vessel was a well-known character in Grecian story. Amymone, the *blameless* daughter of Danaus, was exempt from the punishment inflicted upon her father's children, because she had resisted the solicitations of a Satyr (sensual love). Hence she was permitted to draw the cooling reviving draught of consolation and bliss in a perfect vase. Her sisters, who had yielded to temptation, who had resigned themselves to Desire, were doomed to spend their time in fruitless attempts to fill a bottomless or broken vase, or a perforated sieve, and to become the standing types of the uninitiated, or souls wallowing in the mire of material existence. (The story of the murder was unknown to Homer and Apollodorus, and was doubtless a later fiction.) The Greeks also placed a vase upon the graves of their unmarried persons, as a symbol of celibacy, a practice that seems to illustrate the language of Joseph of Arimathea to Sir Percival: "And wotest thou wherefore [our Lord] hath sent me more than other? for thou hast resembled me in two things; one is, that thou hast seen the Sancgreall, and the other is that thou hast been a *clene maiden* as I am," c. 103.

a nameless knight of perfect and unspotted life is admitted to kiss it, and finds an instantaneous cure for his maladies. But the courage, prowess and chivalric accomplishments of Sir Launcelot are rendered unavailing in the Quest by his guilty commerce with Queen Guenever. He is permitted to see its marvellous effects upon the knight already mentioned who, less worthy than himself in earthly endowments, is yet uncontaminated by mortal sin; and once indeed he is suffered to approach the chamber containing it. But a voice forbids his penetrating to the interior of the sanctuary: yet, having rashly disregarded the admonition, he falls a victim to his fatal curiosity, and continues in an almost lifeless condition for four-and-thirty days. A similar punishment is inflicted upon king Evelake, who having "nighed so nigh" to the holy vessel "that our Lord was displeased with him," he became "blasted with excess of light," and remained "almost blind" the rest of his life.<sup>1</sup> The most solemn instance of its agency in the presence of a profane assembly occurs on the day of Sir Galahad's assuming the siege perilous: "Then anon they heard cracking and crying of thunder, that hem thought the place should alto rive. In the midst of the blast entered a sunbeam, more clear by seven times than ever they saw day; and all they were alighted of the grace of the holy ghost."<sup>2</sup> Then there

<sup>1</sup> The punishment here inflicted upon Sir Lancelot and King Evelake is founded upon an idea, which seems to have pervaded the mythology of most nations, that the person of the Deity is too effulgent for mortal sight, and that any attempt at a direct inspection is sure to be punished with a loss of vision or the senses. Hence the stories of Tirefias and Acteon, of Herse and Aglauros (Paus. i. 18), of Eury-pylus (*Ib.* vii. 19), and Maneros (Plut. *de Isid. et Osrid.* c. 17), and the explanation given to the disease called nympholepsy is clearly referable to the same opinion "Vulgo autem memoria proditum est, quicumque speciem quandam ē fonte, id est, effigiem nymphæ viderint, furendi non fecisse finem, quos Græci οὐμεφολεπτοι, Latini lymphatos, appellant."—Festus. Hence also the eyes were averted on meeting a hero or heroical demon; and an Heroon was passed in silence. *Schol. in Aristoph. Aves*, 1490-3. The same opinion appears to have been current among the Germanic tribes who worshipped the goddess Hertha. Her annual circuit was made in a veiled car; but the servants who washed the body of the goddess on her return, and who consequently must have gazed upon her person, were reported to have been "swallowed up quick" by the earth. When Hercules demanded an epiphany of the god Ammon, we are told this divinity assumed a ram's visor, a fiction which seems to be connected with the same common opinion. (Herod. ii. 42.) The numerous veiled statues seen by Pausanias in his tour through Greece, the veiled goblet carried in the Dionysiac procession at Alexandria (Athen. lib. v. 268), and the general introduction of the Graal (wherein was "a part of the holy blood of our blessed Saviour") covered with samyte, may be considered as further illustrations.

<sup>2</sup> In the ancient world a cup or goblet was not only considered as the most suitable kind of vessel for libations, but it was also regarded as an appropriate type of the Deity. This no doubt arose from the widely-extended dogma, that the Demiurgus of the universe framed the world in his own image. The illustrations of this opinion, as exemplified in votive offerings, in the form of an egg, a globe, sphere, hemisphere, cup, dish, &c., would fill a volume; and happily Mr. Creuzer by his "Dionysius" has rendered further proof on the subject unnecessary. In Egyptian processions a vase led the way as an image of Osiris (Plut. 496); a small urn was the effigy of Isis (Apuleius, *Metamorph.* xi. p. 693); a bowl or goblet was borne on a chariot as the emblem of Dyonyus, in the festival described by Calix-

entered into the hall the holy Grale covered with white samite ; but there was none that might see it, nor who bare it ; and then was all the hall full filled with good odours ; and every knight had such meat and drink as he best loved in this world ; and when the holy Grale had been borne through the hall, then the holy vessel departed suddenly, that they wist not where it became." (c. 35). But these are the mere secular benefits in the power of the sacred cup to bestow. To those allowed to share in its spiritual advantages, who by a life of purity and blameless conduct had capacitated themselves for a more intimate communion with it, it became a cup of eternal life and salvation. On its first epiphany to Sir Galahad and his fellows, the great mystery of the Romish church is visibly demonstrated before them. The transubstantiation of the sacred wafer is effected in their presence palpably and sensibly ; the hallowed "bread become flesh" is deposited in the cup ; and the Redeemer of the world emerges from it to administer to his "knights servants and true children, which [were] come out of deadly life into spiritual life, the high meat which [they] had so much desired." Still they "did not see that which they most desired to see, so openly as they were to behold it in the city of Sarras in the spiritual place." Here Sir Galahad's vision of the transcendent attributes of the Graal is perfected ; his participation in its hallowed contents is consummated

---

enus (*Athenaeus*, v. 268) ; and hence the long catalogue of craters, tripods, &c., so common in the furniture of ancient temples. That the same symbol was acknowledged in other countries previously to any general intercourse with the Roman powers is more than probable. Herodotus has stated of the Issedones, that they decorated the skulls of the departed with gold, reserving them as images (see *Salmas. in Solin.* p. 192) of their ancestors, when they performed those annual rites which the Greeks called *γένεσις*. From this we may infer that the Issedones entertained the same notions of the dead that we find prevailing in almost every ancient and modern nation in a Pagan state, and that they enrolled their deceased relatives among those domestic deities who, by a general system of euphemy, have been called *διὶ χρυσοῖ*, Dii Manes, Gütichen and Guid Neighbours. As the guardians of the family hearth and the household gods of their descendants, the same class of spirits was also termed by the Greeks and Romans *θεοὶ λατουλοὶ*, Lares, *πατρίοι θεοὶ*, and Dii Penates. (See *Salmasius, Exercit. Plin.* p. 46.) Now the images shown at Lavinium as the identical statues of the Penates brought to Italy by Æneas, consisted of *κεράμια στοιχῆα καὶ χαλκᾶ, καὶ κίραμον Τροικῆν*. (Dion. Hal. i. 67.) With the true or fictitious history of Æneas we are not concerned ; it is sufficient to know the form of those symbols which were acknowledged in Italy as suitable representations of the Penates. For an explanation of the caduceal figures we may refer to Servius : "Nullus enim locus sine *Genio* est, qui per *anguem* plerumque offenditur." The Trojan bowl and Issedonian skull will illustrate each other. Livy has also said : "Galli Boii caput ducis (Postumii) præcisum ovantes templo intulere : purgato inde capite, ut mos iis est, calvum auro cælavere : idque *sacrum vas* iis erat, quo solennibus libarent : poculumque idem sacerdoti esse ac templi antistitibus." It will be remembered that according to the Edda the skull of Ymir was converted into the canopy of heaven (Dæmfaga). Something is said on this subject below which, though written without the passages above cited being in the Editor's recollection, he by no means wishes to retract so far as the *moderns* are concerned. Through inadvertency the authorities for that note have been omitted, viz., Bartholin for the facts, and the "Transactions of the Scandinavian Society," p. 323, 1813, for the correction.

to the full extent of his wishes ; he has now obtained the only meed for which this life is worth enduring—a certainty of passing to a better : his earthly travails close, “ his soul departs unto Christ, and a great multitude of angels ” is seen to “ bear it up to heaven. Also his two fellows saw come from heaven a hand, but they saw not the body ; and then it came right to the vessel and took it . . . . . and so bare it up to heaven. Sithence was there never no man so hardy for to say that he had seen the Sangreal.”

In the Arabic version the holy vessel is delivered by an angel to Titurel, at whose birth another minister of heaven attended, and foretold the infant hero’s future glory by declaring that he was destined to wear the crown of Paradise. By him a temple is built for its preservation upon Montsalvaez, “ a sacred mountain, which stands in Salvatierra,<sup>1</sup> a district of Arragon, and lying adjacent to the valley of Roncevalles, and upon the high road from France to Compostella.” The materials for this structure are of the most costly and imperishable description : they are all produced in their appropriate forms and connection by the miraculous power of the Graal ; and the outline of the building is unexpectedly discovered upon a rock of onyx, which the day before had been cleansed of the weeds and herbage that encumbered it. The access to the sanctuary is rendered invisible to all, except the chosen few, by an impervious forest of cedar, cypress and ebony surrounding it. By the daily contemplation of the Graal, Titurel’s life is prolonged to “ more than five hundred years :” just as the glorious career of Jemshid was extended to nearly seven centuries from a similar cause ; and he only sinks to the sleep of death from omitting to visit it during the space of ten days. In Lohengrin, Montsalvaez assumes the place of the isle of Avalon in British romance,<sup>2</sup> and forms the fabled place of

<sup>1</sup> This Montsalvaez in Salvatierra is in all probability the Salisberi of the Norman Romancers ; the Mons salutis (Sawles-byrig ?) of the Christian world. This would account for the castle of Luces Sieur de Gaff being “ pres de Salisberi,” or adjoining the sanctuary in which the Graal was preserved.

<sup>2</sup> The retreat of Arthur to the isle of Avalon forms an exact parallel to what Hesiod has sung of the heroes who fell in the Trojan war, &c. (*Op. et Dies*, 170.) The skolion of Callistratus relative to Harmodius and Aristogeiton shows how late this beautiful fiction continued to be a favourite with the Athenians. In the Islands of the Blest we hear of Semele being married to Rhadamanthus, and Helen to Achilles. The offspring of this latter union was a winged boy, Euphorion, who was destroyed by Jupiter in the island of Melos. (Ptolem. *Hephæst*. c. 4.) Mr. Owen has said of “ Arthur the son of Uthyr Pendragon, that he was a mythological and probably allegorical personage, and the Arcturus or Great Bear ” of the celestial sphere. It is to be regretted that the Welsh antiquaries have told us so little of this mythic Arthur. The Fins, one of the oldest European tribes, and whose destinies have been even more evil-starred than those of the Celts, retain the following article of their ancient faith :—When the soul is permitted to ascend the shoulders of Ursa Major, it passes into the highest heaven and the last stage of felicity. (Mone, *ubi supra*, 62.) Something of this kind is absolutely necessary to make many parts of the *Morte Arthur* intelligible ; for that in this we have to do with the mythological Arthur would be clear even to those who had no knowledge of an historical British prince. Not that the compilers of these fictions were at all aware of the ground they were treading any more than Homer, when he described

retreat of Arthur and his followers. It is here that the British monarch awaits the hour of his re-appearance upon earth;<sup>1</sup> but far from remaining insensible to those chivalric duties which rendered his court an asylum for injured beauty and distressed sovereigns, he still holds a communication with the world, and occasionally dispatches a faithful champion to grant assistance in cases of momentous need.<sup>2</sup> Here also the Graal maintains the sanctity of its character, and becomes at once the register of human grievances and necessities, and the interpreter of the will of Heaven as to the best mode of redressing them.<sup>3</sup> But even here its transcendent purity requires a similar degree of unblemished worth in those who consult its dictates: the attendant knights in Arthur's train are too corrupt and sensual to approach the hallowed fane; and the infant children of Perceval and Lancelot, and the daughter of the courteous

---

the contest between Vulcan and the Scamander, believed himself "to be philosophizing Orphically," to speak with Philostratus. (*Heroic.* p. 100, ed. Boissonnade.) The writers of romance, like the great Mæonian (*si licet componere, &c.*), appear to have poured forth in song the sacred lore of an earlier period, but which, having already received a secular or historical cast, was uttered as such by them with the most unsuspecting good faith.

<sup>1</sup> The doctrine of the metempsychosis, which formed so conspicuous an article of the Celtic creed, would be sufficient to account for the Breton tradition relative to Arthur's re-appearance upon earth. A similar belief was entertained respecting Ogier le Danois, whose identity with Helgi, a hero of Sæmund's *Edda*, has been already noticed. At the close of the song "Helgi and Svava," it is stated "that these persons were born again;" and at the end of the second song concerning Helgi Hundings-bane, we have: "It was believed in the olden time that men might be born again. Helgi and Sigrunr are said to have been regenerated. He was then called Helgi Haddingia-skate; but *she*, Kara Halfden's daughter." The compiler of this collection does not fail to add, that in his time this opinion was regarded as an old-wives' tale. The French romances, however, have perpetuated the tradition.

<sup>2</sup> The author of *Lohengrin* makes Eschenbach assert that his information respecting Arthur's "residence in the mountain, the manner in which the British monarch and his hundred followers were provided with food, raiment, horses and armour, and the names of the champions whom he had dispatched to aid the Christian world," was obtained from St. Brandan. *Lohengrin* or the "Chevelere Assigne" was one of these heroes. In this Arthur assumes the duty allotted to Proserpine who, according to Pindar, "having cleansed the soul of its impurities, re-dispatches it to the upper sun, where it becomes distinguished for its wisdom or its power, and in after-time is ranked among the heroes of public veneration." See Plato's *Meno*, 81, and Hermann's disposition of this fragment in the 3rd volume of Heyne's *Pindar*. In Germany this tradition respecting the Graal became localized: Four miles from Dann, St. Barbara's hill is seen to rise conically from the centre of a plain. By many infatuated Germans this hill is called the *Graal*, who also believe that it contains numerous living persons, whose lives will be prolonged till the day of judgment, and who pass their time there in a round of continued revelry and pleasure. Theodoric a Niem. lib. ii. *de Schismat.* c. 20, as cited by Prætorius, i. 395.

<sup>3</sup> The distress of Elsam von Brabant is made known to Arthur by her ringing a bell, a subject upon which there is no space to dilate. But the reader will not fail to remember that a brazen vessel (or bell) is sounded when Simætha invokes Hecate (Theocritus, ii. 36), and that a similar rite was observed at Athens when the Hierophant invoked the same Goddess as Coré or Proserpine. See Apollodorus, as cited by the Scholiast to Theocritus, and compare the preceding note.

Gawaine are alone considered fit to step within the sacred shrine. Perhaps this would be the place to connect these scattered fragments of general tradition, and to offer a few remarks upon the import of a symbol which has thus found its way into the popular creed of so many distant nations. But a history of romantic fiction forms no part of the present attempt, nor an exposition of those esoteric doctrines which, taught in the heathen temple and perpetuated in the early stages of the Romish church, have descended to the multitude in a less impressive but more attractive guise.

There is, however, one point upon which it may be necessary to make a more explicit avowal, lest the general tendency of the preceding remarks should be construed into an acquiescence with opinions wholly disclaimed. Though the marvels of popular fiction, both in the ancient and modern world, have thus been referred to the same common origin, it is by no means intended to affirm that the elements of fictitious narrative in Greek and Roman literature are no where to be found embodied in the productions of the middle ages. Such an assertion would be at variance with the most limited experience of the subject, and might be refuted by a simple reference to the German tales of MM. Grimm. In the story of the "Serpent-leaf," the principal incident accords with the account of Glaucus and Polyidus, as related by Apollodorus;<sup>1</sup> the cranes of Ibucus figure under another form in the tale of the "Jew and the Skinker";<sup>2</sup> and the slipper of Cinderella finds a parallel, though somewhat sobered, in the history of the celebrated Rhodope.<sup>3</sup> In another story of the same collection we meet with the fabled punishment of Regulus, inflicted on the persons of two culprits;<sup>4</sup> Ovid's *Baucis and Philemon* may be said to

<sup>1</sup> Compare Grimm's *Kinder-und Haus-Märchen*, No. 16, with Apollod. *Biblioth.* iii. 3. 1. There is perhaps no fable that has obtained a more extensive circulation than this. Another version of the story attributes the cure of Glaucus to Aesculapius (Hyg. *Astrom.* 14) : and according to Xanthus, as cited by Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* lib. xxv. c. 5), it formed a piece of Lydian history. The *Quarterly Review*, (No. 58) has cited the following illustration of it from Roger Bacon's *Opus Majus*: "At Paris there was lately a sage, who sought out the serpent's nest, and selecting one of the reptiles, he cut it into small pieces, leaving only as much undissected membrane as was sufficient to prevent the fragments from falling asunder. The dying serpent crawled as well as it could until it found a leaf, whose touch immediately united the severed body; and the sage, thus guided by the creature whom he had mangled, was taught to gather a plant of inestimable virtue." While this sheet was passing through the press (1824), a similar story was related to the Editor, of an old crone practising leech-craft in Glamorganshire at the present day. The ancient name of this valuable herb was balis or ballis. (Comp. Pliny with the *Etymol. Magnum.*) In the *Lai d'Eliduc*, two weasels are substituted for the serpents of the ancient fiction.

<sup>2</sup> Grimm, No. 115. Cic. *Tusc.* 4, c. 43.

<sup>3</sup> Grimm, No. 21. Aelian. *Var. Hist.* lib. xiii. c. 32.

<sup>4</sup> Grimm, No. 13. Appian in *Libycis*. In the note to the "Three Mannikins in the Wood," it is stated from the Great Chronicle of Holland, that this punishment was inflicted on Gerhard van Velzen, for the murder of Count Florence V. of Holland (1296). After being rolled in the cask for three days, he was asked how he felt, when he intrepidly replied:

"Ich ben noch dezelve man,  
Die Graaf Floris syn leven nam."

have furnished the basis of the Poor and the Rich Man :<sup>1</sup> the Gaudie and his Master contains the history of the Thessalian Erisichthon ;<sup>2</sup> the Bœotian Sphinx exerts her agency in a variety of forms ;<sup>3</sup> and the descent of Rhampsinitus, and his diceing with Demeter, is shadowed forth in a series of narratives.<sup>4</sup> Another of Ovid's fables, the history of Picus and Circe, is in strict analogy with a considerable portion of the "Two Brothers ;" other incidents may be said to have been borrowed from the account of the same enchantress in the *Odyssey* : the annual sacrifice of a virgin to the destructive dragon forms a pendant to the story in Pausanias concerning the dark demon of Temessa ; and the test of the hero's success, the production of the dragon's tongue, which also occurs in the romances of Wolf-dietrich and Tristram, is to be met with in the local history of Megara.<sup>5</sup> The mysterious cave of "Gaffer Death" receives its chief importance from its resemblance to a similar scene in the vision of Timarchus ;<sup>6</sup> and

I am still the self-same man, who took away the life of Count Florence ! The same punishment is also mentioned in the Swedish popular ballads published by Geyer and Afzelius, i. No. 3 : the Danish *Kiempe Viser*, No. 165 : in Perrault's Fairy Tale "Les Fées," and the Pentamerone, iii. 10. (Grimm.) [See also Mr. Edgar Taylor's *German Popular Stories*, and the Notes.]

<sup>1</sup> Grimm, No. 87. Ovid. *Met.* viii. 679, where the presence of a divinity is manifested by a miracle running through the fictions of every country :

" Interēa, quoties haustum cratera, repleri  
Sponte suā, per seque vident succrescere vina,  
Attoniti," &c.

Compare note above.

<sup>2</sup> Grimm, No. 68. Ovid. *Met.* viii. 738, and *Aelian. Var. Hist.* i. 28.

<sup>3</sup> The popular view of this subject in the ancient world is given by Pausanias, ix. c. 26, who represents the Sphinx as a natural daughter of Laius, intrusted with a secret delivered to Cadmus by the oracle at Delphi. The rightful heir to the throne was in possession of the solution to this mystery ; the illegitimate pretenders were detected by their ignorance of it, and suffered the penalty due to their deceit.

<sup>4</sup> Grimm, No. 82, and the note containing the several variations of the tale. Herodotus, ii. 122.

<sup>5</sup> Grimm, No. 60. Ovid. *Met.* xiv. 327. *Od.* x. 230-335. Comp. Ovid. xiv. 270. Pausanias, vi. c. 6. [See above, p. 29, note 1.] Weber's *Northern Antiquities*, p. 123. *Sir Tristrem*, fyte 2, ft. 37. The scholiast to Apollonius Rhodius relates, on the authority of the Megarica, that Alcathous the son of Pelops, having slain Chryippus, fled from Megara, and settled in some other town. The Megarean territory being afterwards ravaged by a lion, persons were dispatched to destroy it ; but Alcathous, meeting the monster, slew it, and cut out the tongue, with which he returned to Megara. The party sent to perform the exploit also returned, averring the success of their enterprise ; when Alcathous advanced, and produced the lion's tongue, to the confusion of his adversaries. Schol. in *Apoll. Rhod.* lib. i. v. 517.

<sup>6</sup> Grimm, No. 44. "Gaffer Death. . . . now led the physician into a subterranean cavern, containing an endless number of many thousand thousand lighted candles. Some were long, others half-burnt, and others again almost out. Every instant some of these candles became extinguished, and others lighted anew ; and the flame was seen to move from one part of the cave to another. Look here ! (said Death to his companion,) these are the vital sparks of human existence." In Plutarch's tract *De Genio Socratis*, Timarchus is made to address his mysterious guide thus : "But I see nothing except a number of stars shooting about the chasm, some of which are plunging into it, and others shining brilliantly and rising out of it." These are said to be the intellectual portions of the soul (Nous), or demoniacal intelligences, and the ascending stars souls upon their return from earth ; the others, souls de-

the most interesting tale in the whole collection—whether we speak with reference to its contents or the admirable style of the narrative—the Machandel Boom<sup>1</sup>—is but a popular view of the same mythos upon which the Platonists have expended so much commentary—the history of the Cretan Bacchus or Zagreus. In Sweden, the story of Hero and Leander has become localized, and forms the subject of an interesting national ballad; the fate of Midas is to be found incorporated as an undoubted point of Irish history;<sup>2</sup> and the treasury of Rhampsinitus has passed from Egypt to Greece, and from Mycenæ to Venice.<sup>3</sup> The youthful history of Theseus bears a strong resemblance to many parts of Sir Degoré; the white and black sails, the emblems of his success or failure, are attached to the history of Tristram and fair Ysoude; the ball of silk given him by Ariadne has passed into the hands of the Russian witch Jaga-Baba, and the heroic feat which was to establish the proof of his descent has been inserted in the lives of Arthur and the Northern Sigurdr.<sup>4</sup> The talisman of Meleager

scending into life c. 22. In this we receive the key to the attribute bestowed upon the ancient divinities who presided over generation and childbirth, such as Lucina, Artemis-Phosphorus, &c. and hence also the analogy between the stories of Meleager and Norna-Gest may be explained from a common point of popular faith.

<sup>1</sup> This extraordinary tale will be found in the second volume of the *German Stories*. To this the reader is referred, who will feel grateful that no garbled abstract of it is here attempted. The points of coincidence may be thus briefly stated. In the Cretan fable, the destruction of Zagreus is attributed to the jealousy of his step-mother Juno; and the Titans (those telluric powers who were created to avenge their mother's connubial wrongs) are the instruments of her cruelty. The infant god is allured to an inner chamber by a present of toys and fruit (among these an *apple*), and is forthwith murdered. The dismembered body is now placed in a kettle, for the repast of his destroyers; but the vapour ascending to heaven, the deed is detected, and the perpetrators struck dead by the lightning of Jove. Apollo collects the bones of his deceased brother, and buries them at Delphi, where the palingenesis of Bacchus was celebrated periodically by the Hofs and Thyades. (Compare Clemens Alex. *Protrept.* p. 15, ed. Potter; Nonnus Dionys. vi. 174, &c. and Plutarch *de Isid. et Osirid.* c. 35, et *De Esi Carnium*, i. c. vii.) But this again is only another version of the Egyptian mythos relative to Osiris, which will supply us with the chest, the tree, the sisterly affection, and perhaps the bird (though the last may be explained on other grounds). (Plut. *de Isid.* &c. c. 13, *seqq.*) Grimm wishes to consider the “Machandel-Boom” the juniper-tree; and not the “Mandel,” or almond-tree. It will be remembered that the latter was believed by the ancient world to possess very important properties. The fruit of one species, the Amygdala, impregnated the daughter of the River Sangarius with the Phrygian Atty (Paus. vii. 17); and another, the Persea, was the sacred plant of Ius, so conspicuous on Egyptian monuments. (For this interpretation of the Persea, see S. de Saçy's *Abdallat Relation de l'Egypte*, p. 47, 72, and the Christian and Mahomedan fictions there cited.) This story of dressing and eating a child is historically related of Atreus, Tantalus, Procne, Harpalice (Hyginus, ed. Staveren, 206), and Attyages (Herod. i. 119); and is obviously a piece of traditional scandal borrowed from ancient mythology. The Platonistic exposition of it will be found in Mr. Taylor's tract upon the Bacchic Mysteries, (*Pamphleteer*, No. 15.)

<sup>2</sup> Keating's *Hist. of Ireland*, as cited by MM. Grimm, iii. 391.

<sup>3</sup> Compare Herod. ii. c. 121. Schol. in Aristoph. *Nub.* 508, and the notes to *Childe Harold*, canto iv.

<sup>4</sup> Compare Plutarch's *Life of Theseus* with Sir Degoré, as published [for the Abbotsford Club from the Auchinleck MS.] Scott's *Sir Tristrem*, p. 199; Prince Wladimir and his Round Table, a collection of early Russian Heroic Songs, Leipzig,

—“Althaea's firebrand”—has been conferred upon the aged Norna-Gest, a follower of King Olaf;<sup>1</sup> the artifice of Jack the Giant-killer, in throwing a stone among his enemies, occurs in the histories of Cadmus and Jason;<sup>2</sup> and the perilous labour of Alcmene is circumstantially related in the Scotch ballad of Willie's Lady.<sup>3</sup> Among the marvellous tales with which the traveller Pytheas chose to enliven the narrative of his voyage, at the risk of sacrificing his character for discernment and veracity, the following has been preserved by the Scholiast to Apollonius Rhodius. “Vulcan appears to have taken up his abode in the islands of Lipara and Strongyle . . . . and it was formerly said, that whoever chose to carry there a piece of unwrought iron, and at the same time deposited the value of the labour, might on the following morning come and have a sword, or whatever else he wished, for it.”<sup>4</sup> This fiction has a double claim upon our attention, both from the manner in which it became localized at a very early period in England, and from the interest it has recently excited, by its reception into one of those unrivalled productions which have given a new character to the literature of the day.<sup>5</sup> In a letter written by Francis Wise to Dr. Mead, “concerning some antiquities in Berkshire, particularly the White Horse,” an account is given of a remarkable pile of stones, to which the following notice is attached: “All the account which the country people are able to give of it is: At this place lived formerly an invisible smith; and if a traveller's horse had left a shoe upon the road, he had no more to do than to bring the horse to this place with a piece of money, and leaving both there for some little

1819, 8vo. as cited by Mone, 130; the *Morte Arthur*, P. I. c. 4; and the *Volsunga Saga*, Müller, p. 31.

<sup>1</sup> Apollod. *Biblioth.* i. c. 8, 1. “At length Gest told them the reason of his being called Norna-Gest. Three Völar cast his nativity: the two first spaeed everything that was good, but the last became displeased, and said the child should not live longer than the candle lasted which was then burning. Upon this the two Völar seized the light, and bade his mother preserve it, saying, it was not to be lighted till the day of his death.” *Norna-Gest's Saga*, Müller, 113. Gest was more fortunate in his family connections than the Grecian hero; for on the day king Olaf recommended him to try the experiment of lighting the candle, he was 300 years old. *Ib.*

<sup>2</sup> Schol. in Apoll. Rhod. iii. 1178.

<sup>3</sup> *Minstrelsy of the Border*, vol. ii. Sir Walter Scott has observed, that the billie-blind, who detects the mother's charm in this ballad, was a species of domestic spirit or Brownie. The Thebans appear to have held a similar opinion relative to Galinthias, whom they considered a ministrant of Hecate, and to whom the first sacrifice was performed during the festival of Hercules. (Anton. Lib. c. 29.) They were hence reputed to worship a weasel (Ælian. *Hift. Nat.* xii. v.), an animal of an exceedingly ominous character in the ancient world. (Theophrastus, *Charat.* 17.) In the reputed house of Amphitryon, Pausanias (ix. 11) saw a relievo representing the Sorceresses (Pharmacides) sent by Juno to obstruct Alcmene's labour. According to him (and he gathered the account at Thebes), they were defeated by Histeris, a daughter of Tiresias; which again confirms the analogy between the ancient and modern fiction, for Tiresias and his family move in Theban story with all the importance of tutelary divinities.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. in Apoll. Rhod. iv. 761.

<sup>5</sup> [Sir W. Scott's *Kenilworth*.]

time, he might come again and find the money gone, but the horse new shoed. The stones standing upon the Rudgeway, as it is called, I suppose, gave occasion to the whole being called Wayland-Smith, which is the name it was always known by to the country-people." The reader will have no difficulty in detecting here the previous recital of Pytheas, or in recognising in this simple tradition the germ of a more recent fiction, as it has been unfolded in the novel of *Kenikworth*.<sup>1</sup> But he may not be equally aware, that the personage whose abilities it has so unostentatiously transmitted, is a very important character in early Northern poetry; and that the fame of "Wayland-Smith," though less widely extended than it now promises to become, was once the theme of general admiration, from the banks of the Bosphorus<sup>2</sup> to the Atlantic and Frozen oceans. The first historical song in the *Edda* of Sæmund—if it be lawful to give this name to a composition containing such a strong admixture of mythological matter—is devoted to the fortunes of a celebrated smith called Volundr.<sup>3</sup> The *Vilkina-Saga*, a production of the fourteenth century, enters more fully into his history; and he is spoken of by various writers between the ninth and fourteenth centuries<sup>4</sup> as the fabricator of every curious weapon or unusual piece of art. In the outline of his story there is a very strong analogy<sup>5</sup> with the events that shine so marvellously in the life of *Dædalus*. The flight of Völundr from his native country, like that of the Athenian artist, is attributed to an act of violence upon the persons of two rival

<sup>1</sup> [Alfred the Great speaks of Welond "the wise smith," as a renowned personage of the remotest antiquity; and paraphrasing the reflections of Boethius on the transient nature of human glory, exclaims, "Where are now the bones of Welond? Or who knows the place where they were deposited?"—R. Taylor. See the late Mr. Singer's little publication on this subject, 1847, 12mo., which comprises the remarks of Michel and Depping, referred to by Sir F. Madden (H. E. P. 1840, i. xlii.)]

<sup>2</sup> In the *Vilkina-Saga* he is called Velent: but the author adds, he bore the name of Völundr among the Varingar. These *Baρύγγα* were mercenaries in the service of the Greek emperors. See Anna Comn., Codrin., &c., and Ducange v. *Barangii*. In the eleventh century, the northern portion of this body-guard amounted to 300, according to the Flatoe Codex, c. 507-8, which makes a distinction between them and the French and Flemings in the Imperial service. Müller, 149.

<sup>3</sup> [Conybeare's *Illustr. of A.-S. Poetry*, p. 236.]

<sup>4</sup> Some of these have been already noticed. (See Alfred's Boethius, and the poem of *Beowulf*, and below.) The following may be added from Müller's *Saga-Bibliothek*: "Et nis duratis Vualandia fabrica giris obstaret . . ." from a Latin poem of the ninth century, entitled "De prima Expeditione Attilæ regis Hunnorum in Gallia, ac de rebus gestis Waltharii Aquitanorum principis." Lipsiae, 1780. In Labbe's *Bibliotheca MSS. Nova*, tom. ii., the following notice occurs: "Gillermus Sector Ferri hoc nomen sortitus est, quia cum Normannis configens venire solito conflixi deluctans, ense corto vel scorto durissimo, quem Valandus faber condiderat, per medium corpus loricatum fecavit una percussione." *Historia Pontificum et Comitum Engolismenorum* incerto auctore (but who was living in 1159), p. 252. See also the romance of Horn-child and Maiden Riminild, in Ritson's *Met. Rom.* vol. iii. p. 295.

<sup>5</sup> [Mr. Keightley (*Tales and Popular Fictions*, 1834, p. 271) scarcely admits the analogy.]

craftsmen. His first reception at the court of Nidung is attended by every demonstration of kindness and attention; but an accidental offence occasions the seizure and mutilation of his person, and he is compelled to labour incessantly in the duties of the forge for his tyrannical host. The double cruelties inflicted on him, in the loss of liberty and his bodily injuries, inspire him with sentiments of revenge: the infant sons of his persecutor fall the victims of his artifice; their sister is seduced and publicly disgraced; and the triumphant artist, having attached wings to his person, takes his way through the air to seek a more friendly employer.<sup>1</sup> It is not a little remarkable, that the only term in the Icelandic language to designate a labyrinth is Völundar-hus—a Weland's house.<sup>2</sup>

The resemblances here detailed are obviously too intimate to have been the result of accident, or a common development of circumstances possessing some general affinity. The majority, on investigation, will be found to have been derived, however indirectly, from sources of classical antiquity; and their existence in this dismembered state forcibly illustrates a remark of Mr. Campbell's, which is equally distinguished for its truth and beauty: “that fiction travels on still lighter wings [than science], and scatters the seeds of her wild flowers imperceptibly over the world, till they surprise us by springing up with similarity, in regions the most remotely divided.<sup>3</sup> But while these resemblances tend to establish the fact that popular fiction is in its nature *traditive*,<sup>4</sup> they necessarily direct our attention to another important question—the degree of antiquity to be ascribed to the great national fables relative to Arthur, Theoderic, and Charlemagne. It will be almost needless to remark, that the admixture of genuine occurrences in all these romances is so disproportionate to the fictitious materials by which it is surrounded, that without the influence of particular names and the locality given to the action we should

<sup>1</sup> These circumstances are taken from the recital given in the *Vilkina-Saga*. (Müller, 154.) The Eddaic song makes no mention of Völundr's flight to the court of Niththur (Nidung), nor of his killing his instructors the Dwarfs: a deed of mere self-defence, according to the *Vilkina-Saga*, since, his rapid improvement having excited their envy, they were devising a plan for destroying him.

<sup>2</sup> The name of Völundr became a general name in the North for any distinguished artist, whether working in stone or iron. The same may be said of Dædalus in Greece (Δαδαλος, δαδαλα), whose labours are found to run through a succession of ages; and who, in addition to his numerous inventions, constructed such enormous works in Egypt, Sicily and Crete. In the former country he received divine honours (Diod. Sic. i. p. 109); the mythologic character of Völundr is clear from the Edda; and Prætorius speaks of spirits Volands and Water-Nixen as synonymous terms. If we allow the daughter of Nidung to take the place of Pasiphæ, the Athenian proverb will be fully substantiated: *τι παρι μιθε καὶ τὸ Δαιδαλον μύεται*. Suidas, i. p. 752.

<sup>3</sup> *Essay on English Poetry*, p. 30. To this may be added the doctrine of an ancient aphorism cited by Demosthenes (De falsa legatione):

Θέμα δὲ τοῖς πάρεσταις διδάσκεται, θέμα πολλαὶ<sup>1</sup>  
Λαοὶ φρικήσονται. Θεῖς νῦν τοῖς λοτοῖς καὶ αὐτή.

<sup>4</sup> “Suppose we on things *traditive* divide,  
And both appeal to Scripture to decide.”—Dryden.

never connect the events detailed with personages of authentic history. The deeds ascribed to Charlemagne, by a mere change of scene, become as "germane" to the life of the most illustrious of the Gothic kings as any of the circumstances advanced in his own veracious Vilkina-Saga. A similar transference might be effected in the "most antient and famous history of Prince Arthur," without violating the probability or disturbing the accuracy of the account: and the same process might be applied with equal success to almost every other romance laying claim to an historical character. But though all parties may be agreed that the sub-structure of these recitals is essentially fabulous, the great point to be investigated, is the æra when each fable first obtained a circulation. Are the fictitious memorials thus united to the names of these several European kings the sole invention of an age posterior to their respective reigns, or the accumulated traditions of a long succession of centuries both antecedent and subsequent to the period in which the events are placed? It cannot be expected that such an extensive subject will receive the discussion it merits on the present occasion; but as some of the preceding remarks are founded on an assumption that the latter position is demonstrable, the general question may be illustrated by one example out of many, of the mode in which this amalgamation has been effected in Northern Romance.

The life of Theoderic of Berne, the mirror of German chivalry, has been connected in later romance with the adventures of Siegfried, the hero of the Nibelungen Lied.<sup>1</sup> The authentic history of this latter prince is wholly beyond the hope of recovery; but under the more decidedly Northern name of Sigurdr, he has been allowed the same distinction in Icelandic fiction that attends him in the fables of Germany. In Sæmund's Edda his achievements are recorded in a series of simple narrative songs, and the Volsunga-Saga is wholly devoted to the fortunes of his family. The ground-work of Siegfried's story is indisputably the fatal treasure, originally the property of Andvar the dwarf; but which, extorted from him by violence as a ransom for three captive deities, receives a doom from the injured Duergr, which involves every after-possessor in the same inevitable ruin as the necklace of Eriphyle in Grecian story. In the Nibelungen Lied the previous history of the "hoard" is wholly overlooked; and its acquisition by Siegfried, notwithstanding the important part assigned it in the subsequent stages of the recital, forms only a subsidiary argument. The Edda dwells with a spirit of eager yet mournful pleasure upon the successive acts of iniquity by which the threat of Andvar is substantiated; and the iron mask of destiny obtrudes itself at every step with the same appalling rigour as in the tragic theatre of Greece. But in either narrative the hero of the tale, whether Sigurdr or Siegfried, is spoken of as the son of Sigmund; and to him are attributed the destruction of the dragon and the consequent spoliation of the treasure. A document nearer

<sup>1</sup> [See Mr. E. Taylor's *Lays of the Minnesingers*, above referred to.—*Anon.*]

home, but which has evidently wandered to these shores from the North, the Anglo-Saxon poem of Beowulf, gives a different version of the story. In this interesting record of early Danish fable the discomfiture of Grendel gives occasion for the introduction of a Scop, or bard who, like Demodocus in the *Odyssey*, entertains the warriors at Hrothgar's table with an account of deeds of earlier adventure. In compliment to Beowulf, he selects the most distinguished event in Northern history; and the subject of his song is the slaughter of the dragon and the seizure of the treasure by *Sigmund* the *Wælsing*.<sup>1</sup> We are not to consider this as an accidental variation, either intentionally or ignorantly supplied by the Christian translator or renovator of the poem; the celebrity of Sigmund is supported by the mention of his name in other Northern documents. In the *Hyndlu-Lioth* he is connected with Hermod<sup>2</sup> as a favourite of the Gods, upon whom Odin had bestowed a sword as a mark of his approval. And in the celebrated *Drapr* upon the death of Eric Blodoxe, who was slain in a descent upon the English coast during the tenth century, and which is perhaps the oldest Icelandic poem having reference to a contemporary historical event, Sigmund is summoned by Odin, as the most distinguished member of Valhalla, to advance and receive the Norwegian king. But, independently of this collateral testimony, the song of the Anglo-Saxon scop contains internal evidence of its fidelity to the genuine tradition. The *Edda* and the *Volsunga-Saga* make Sigmund the son of a king *Volsungr*, whom they place at the head of the genealogic line, and consider as the founder of the *Volsunga* dynasty. It is, however, certain that this *Volsungr* is a mere fictitious personage; since, on every principle of analogy, the *Volsunga* race must have derived their family

<sup>1</sup> The present text as printed by Thorkelin reads,

“Thæt he framfige  
Munde secan” &c. p. 68.

The manuscript,

“Thæt he fram Sigemunde  
Seigan hyrde.”

Mr. Grundtvig, a Danish poet, has the merit of first making known the connection between this song and the *Edda*, by a communication inserted in the “*Kjöbenhavn Skilderi*.” (Müller, p. 381.) It was detected in the first sheets sent to this country as a specimen of the publication.

<sup>2</sup> “Gaf han Hermothi  
Hialm ac bryniu,  
En Sigmundi  
Sverth at thiggia.  
  
Dedit Hermodo  
Galeam et loricam,  
At Sigmundo  
Ensem accipere (ferre, habere).”

This is clearly the Sigmund of the Anglo-Saxon scop, who immediately passes to the history of Hermod. The same may be said of the Sigmund mentioned in King Eric's *drapr*, where he is conjoined with his son Sinfiotli. (Compare *Sinfiotla-lok* in Sæmund's *Edda*.)

appellative from an ancestor of the name of Vols, just as the Skiolings obtained theirs from Skiole, the Skilfings from Skilf, and the Hildings from Hildr. Now this is the genealogy observed by the Anglo-Saxon scop, who first speaks generally of the Wælsing race, and then specifically of Sigmund the offspring of Wæls.<sup>1</sup> From this it will be clear that Sigurdr or Siegfried, in the great event of his history, has been made to assume the place of his father Sigmund, upon the same arbitrary principle that the Theban Hercules has gathered round his name the achievements of so many earlier heroes. Nor is this, perhaps, the only mutation to which the Northern fiction has been subjected. The catastrophe of the fable, as we have already seen, is wholly dependent upon the treasure of Andvar; and the founder of the Wælsing dynasty bears a name which, in the Icelandic and Anglo-Saxon language, is nearly synonymous with wealth or riches.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wælsinges gewin—Wæl'ses eafera, ed. Thorkelin, pp. 68, 69. Of the Icelandic Völundr, the Anglo-Saxons made Weland, as they have made Wæls of Vols.—Any objection that might be raised to the antiquity of the Edda from this circumstance would only apply to the Introduction to the song, which is confessedly of a more recent date. It will hence be clear that, at the time when these poems were collected, the fiction was of such antiquity that it had become corrupted at the source. The authenticity of the Edda certainly does not stand in need of the additional support here given; but it must be gratifying to those who have favoured the integrity of these songs to find their opinions confirmed by such conclusive and unimpeachable testimony. Mr. Müller, in the interesting volume so repeatedly referred to in various parts of this preface, has satisfactorily accounted for the silence of Saxo Grammaticus upon this branch of fabulous Northern history. In his day the fiction had become localized on the Rhine, and was received by him as a portion of authentic German story. (*Saga-Bibliothek*, ii. p. 401.)

<sup>2</sup> Upon a future occasion the Editor will offer his reasons for believing that the present song has been transposed from its proper place to make way for an episode upon the exploits of Hengest, inserted at p. 82, ed. Thorkelin. The subject of this latter document is evidently taken from a larger poem, of which a fragment has been published by Hickes, and is known under the name of the Battle of Finnsburgh. In Beowulf the actors are Fin, Hnæf, Hengest, Guthlaf and Oslaf; in the fragment the same names occur, with the substitution of Ortlaf for Oslaf. The scene in either piece is Finnes-ham, or Finnes-burh, the residence of the before-mentioned Fin. That in these we have an allusion to the founder of the kingdom of Kent, and not to a purely fabulous personage of the same name, will be rendered probable on recollecting that the events recorded contain no admixture of marvelous matter. Both productions are clearly of the same historical class, and written in the same sober spirit, with the fragment of Brythnoth; for the Eotena-cyn of Beowulf, over whom Fin is said to reign, is a general term in Northern poetry for any hostile nation not of the Teutonic stock. From hence it is desired to make two deductions: first, that the events alluded to are anterior to the close of the fifth century; and secondly, that the introduction of this episode into the present poem was not likely to be made after the year 723, when Egbert expelled the last monarch of Kent and dissolved the heptarchy. For this last deduction more explicit reasons will be given, as before stated, on another occasion. It only remains to observe, that the Hengest mentioned in Beowulf was a native of Friesland, and to ask whether Fin was a Celt? and can the Gaelic antiquaries connect him with any Erse sovereign bearing this name? [The Battle of Finnsburgh has been printed with Dr. Grundtvig's and Mr. Kemble's Beowulf [also in Mr. Thorpe's ed. 1854]; and in Conybeare's *Illustrations*, p. 173, in which work there is also a translation by the editor, the Rev. W. D. Conybeare, of the Death of Byrhtnoth, p. xc. the original text of which is given in Mr. Thorpe's *Analecta* under the title of the Battle of Maldon.—R. Taylor. The best account of BEOWULF, from which

The great length to which the preceding remarks have been carried, will make it necessary to be less excursive in considering the second of Mr. Ritson's objections;<sup>1</sup> and fortunately the previous

---

some extracts will be given in the present edition of Warton, is to be found in Mr. Thorpe's *Intro'd.*]

<sup>1</sup> For the same reason (want of space) it has been found necessary to omit any examination of the general style of the romantic tale, and the tone and colouring of its events, as compared with similar productions of the ancient world. The latter indeed are only preserved to us in the meagre notices of the grammarians; but even these inadequate memorials contain the traces of all those lineaments which have been supposed to confer an original character upon the poetry of modern Europe. The same love of adventure, of heroic enterprise, and gallant daring; the same fondness for extraordinary incident and marvellous agency, obtrude themselves at every step: and to take one example out of many, the Life of Perseus might be made to pass for the outline of an old romance or the story of a *genuine chevalier preux*. Let the reader only remember the illegitimate but royal descent of this hero, his exposure to almost certain death in infancy, his providential escape, the hospitality of Dictys, the criminal artifices of Polydectes, the gallant vow by which the unsuspecting stranger hopes to lessen his obligation to the royal house of Seriphus, the consequences of that vow, the aid he receives from a god and goddess, the stratagem by which he gains a power over the monstrous daughter of Phorcys, who alone can instruct him in the road which leads to the dwelling of the Nymphs: the gifts conferred upon him by the latter, the magic scrip (which is to conceal the Gorgon's head without undergoing petrifaction), the winged sandals (which are to transport him through the air), the helmet of Pluto (which is to render him invisible), the sword of Mercury, or according to other traditions, of Vulcan, and the assistance given him by Minerva in his encounter with the terrific object of his pursuit,—let the reader only recall these circumstances to his memory, and he will instantly recognise the common details of early European romance. Again: his punishment of the inhospitable and wily Atlas, the rescue of Andromeda, and the slaughter of the monster about to devour her; the rivalry and defeat of Phineus, the delivery of Danaë from the lust of Polydectes, and the ultimate succession of Perseus to the throne of Argos, which he foregoes that he may become the founder of another kingdom,—only complete the train of events which make up the successful course of a modern hero's adventures. A mere change of names and places,—with the substitution of a dwarf for Mercury, and a fairy for Minerva, of a giantess for the Phorcyes, of a mild enchantress for the Nymphs, a magician for Atlas, and the terrific flash of the hero's eyes for the petrifying power of Medusa's head—an Icelandic romance would say “at hafa ægishialma i augom,”—with a due admixture of all the pageantry of feudal manners would give us a romance which, for variety of incident and the prolific use of supernatural agency, might vie with any popular production of the middle-age. The extraordinary properties of the sandals and helmet have already been shown to occupy a conspicuous rank among the wonders of modern romance; the sword of Mercury was called Harpé, as that of Arthur was named Excalibor; while to prove the affinity of this singular story with the genuine elements of popular fiction, all its incidents are to be found in the life of the Northern Sigurdr, or the Neapolitan tale of Lo Dragone. (*Pentamerone*, Giorn. iv. Nov. 35.)

There is another point connected with the present subject, upon which a similar silence has been observed, and found exclusively in modern romance,—the tone of chivalric devotion to the commands and wishes of the softer sex, and the general spirit of gallantry which, without the influence of passion acknowledged their rights and privileges. On a future occasion it will be shown, that in considering this question, the expressions of Tacitus in his *Germania* have been too literally interpreted. There is little in this valuable tract, relative to the female sex, which does not find a parallel in the institutions of other nations of the ancient world, wherever we find a notice of them, under a *similar degree of civilization*. The respect paid to female inspiration ought not to receive a more enlarged acceptation than is given to the remark of Pythagoras: “He farther observed, that the inventor

labours of Mr. Ellis<sup>1</sup> have rendered any discussion of the subject almost superfluous. The fidelity of Geoffrey of Monmouth in the

of names . . . perceiving the genius of women is most adapted to piety, gave to each of their ages the appellation of some Deity. In conformity to which also, the oracles in Dodona and at Delphi are unfolded into light by a woman." (Iamb. *Life of Pythagoras*, c. xi. Taylor's Transl.) Indeed the customs of the Doric States have been wholly overlooked in settling this question, and the Attic or Ionic system of seclusion taken for the general practice of all Greece. Is there anything in Tacitus more decidedly in favour of female rights, than the apophthegm of Gorgo preserved by Plutarch (and quoted from memory)? "Of all your sex in Greece," said a stranger, "you Lacedæmonian women alone govern the men." "True," replied Gorgo; "but then we alone are the mothers of men." The elder Cato met a similar charge by observing: "Omnes homines mulieribus imperant, nos omnibus hominibus, nobis mulieres." But here again it was insufficient to check those results so mournfully pourtrayed by Tacitus in his *Annals* and his *History*. If, however, this feeling were of Northern or Germanic origin, we might naturally expect that it would be most apparent among those nations who were last converted to Christianity, and who are known to have preserved so many of their ancient opinions. Now Herr Muller, who has just risen from the perusal of all the Northern Sagas, assures us, that there is no trace of romantic gallantry in any of these productions: and it is clear from his analysis of many, that the Scandinavian women in early times were cuffed and buffeted with as little compunction as Amroo and Morfri castigate Ibla. (See *Antar*. i. 334, ii. 71.) [I think there is a sentiment contrary to this in the chapter on the women of Teutonic Mythology and Romance in my *Womankind*; see especially, on p. 27, the rebuke given to Thor.—*Wright*.]

We might with equal propriety attempt to trace to the forests of Germany all the subtleties of the scholastic philosophy (which arose in the same age as the courts of Love), as to claim for their inhabitants that reverence and adoration of the female sex which has descended to our own times. This deference to female rights and the establishment of an equality between the sexes have in their origin been wholly independent of love as a passion (whose language in all ages and among all nations has been the same), and are manifestly the offspring of that dispensation, which has purified religion of every sensual rite, and which, by spiritualizing all our hopes and wishes of a future existence, has shed the same refining influence on our present institutions: "L'amour de Dieu et des dames" was not a mere form.—*Price*.

[I subjoin the genealogy from the *Edda of Snorro Sturleson*; and if I am right in supposing that it was overlooked formerly by Mr. Conybeare and Mr. Price in their inquiries relative to the mythic personages of Anglo-Saxon poetry in which I had the pleasure to participate, and recently by Mr. Kemble in the very interesting disquisitions in which he has so ably followed up these investigations, I shall be glad that it has once more fallen in my way to contribute anything to the elucidation of a question which long ago interested me, when I was first led to suggest that Beowulf was the Beow of the Saxon genealogies.

Whether we are to consider the names in these genealogies as those of personages having really existed, and indebted for their supernatural attributes to legendary exaggeration,—or of the mythic personifications of principles or attributes which were worshipped as gods, and "from being gods, have sunk into epic heroes," may afford matter for curious speculation. Mr. Kemble appears to have come over to the latter opinion, upon grounds which he states much at length in his postscript. He there suggests that Beow might have been the principle of fertility, or god of harvest (as Eostre was the goddess of spring), whence his connection with Sceaf;—that Scildwa was an appellative of the Deity as a protector; Geata, as the author of abundance; and so of others, from etymological conjecture. He concludes that when all the names are rejected from the lists

<sup>1</sup> See *Metrical Romances*, vol. i. Introduction.

execution of his labours—at least his scrupulous exactness in preparing the reader's mind for any important deviations from, or

“which are mere appellatives of God, there remain to us five only, Sceafa, Beowa, Geat, Finn, and Woden;” “of these five the two last and three first seem respectively clasped together, and denote the active, moving godhead, and the fruitful increase-giving godhead,” p. xxvi.; and he thence argues “that the three first are names of Woden himself in one of his characters,—and the two last in another of his characters.” Yet though originally “mere appellatives of God,” he nevertheless looks upon all the names as having acquired personality, and thus been “introduced into epic poetry, and represented as gods to be worshipped with altars and sacrifice, until Christianity, by overturning the old creed, reduced them to the rank of heroes,” p. xxvi.

I confess, however, that such a view of the subject appears to me rather to originate in notions derived from philosophical speculation or later schemes of theology, involving even the meaning of the terms ‘person’ and ‘personality,’ than in what can be conceived of a barbarous people in such early times: and I should still be inclined, instead of attributing to their deities this ideal origin, to seek for them as really distinct persons, of whose individual existence traces may perhaps still be found among the earliest records of the north.

Edda of Snorro Sturleson.		Saxon Chron.	Textus Roffensis:	MS. Trin.
Ed. of <i>Referens</i> .	<i>Goranfson's edit.</i>	An. 854.	<i>Wifex geneal.</i>	
Sif	Sif, the sybill	Adam	Adam, &c.	Noah.
Loride	Lorithi	Seth		Japhet.
Heurede		Enoch		
Wyngethor	Vingithor	Jared		
Wingener	Vingener	Matualem	Mathuful	
Moda	Moda	Lamech	Lamec	
Mage	Mage	Noe		
Cepheth	Schmeg	Sceaf, [id est. filius Noe], &c.	Sceaf, Secef, fuit alius Noe natus in Arcâ	Strephus.
Lieding, (Liveding)	Bedwig	Bedwig	Bedwig	Bedegius.
Atha, (Athan)	Atra (nobis Annan)	Hwala		Guals.
Urmann	Irman	Hathra	Hadra	Hadra.
Modar	Eremodr	Itermon	Heraman	Sternodius.
Skialdun, (nobis Skield)	Skialldun, (nobis Skield)	Heremod	Heremod	Sceph.
BIAFF, (nobis Bjær)	BIAP, (nobis Bear)	Sceldwa	Sceldwa	Sceldius.
		BEAW	BEAW	BOKNIRUS.
Jat	Jat	Tetwa	Tethwa	Nennius, <i>Gunn's edit.</i>
Gadolff	Gadolfr	Geat	Eata	
		Godwulf	Godulf, [aliis Geta]	Geta, qui fuit filius dei.
Finn	Finf	Finn	Finn	Folegaard.
Frithlaff, (nobis Friedlieff)	Frithlaff, (nobis Friedlieff)	Frithuwulf		Finn.
		Frawine	Frealf	Fredulf.
		Frithuwald		Freakof.
VODDEN, (nobis Odin)	VODDEN, (nobis Opin)	WODEN	WODEN <i>Frealefing</i>	WODEN.
Wedgeck	Odin's four sons.	Beldig	Baldieg	Guechta.
Vinurpils		Brood	Brand	
Baldieck	Vedreg	Friðugar	Froedegar	
Brand	Baldig	Frawine	Frawine	
Frawine		Wig	Wig	
Sigge	Sigi	Gewis	Gewis	
Igrir	Skiold	Efa	Efa	
		Elefa	Elefa	
		Cerdic	Cerdic	
		Creoda	Creoda	
		Cymric	Cymric	
		Ceawlin[Ceim	Ceawlin	
		Cuthwine	Cudwine	
		Cutha[-wulf]	Cutha	
		Ceolwald	Coolward	
		Cenred	Cenred	

suppression of, his original—has been so satisfactorily established, that we might cite his example as an instance of good faith that would have done honour to a more critical age, and shining conspicuously amid the general laxity of his own.<sup>1</sup> The licenses he has allowed himself, in the shape of amplification, are to all appearance nothing more than a common rhetorical exercise, inherited by the middle ages from the best days of antiquity: and the letters and speeches introduced, admitting them to be of his own composition, are the necessary appendage of the school in which he was disciplined. To charge him with “imposture and forgery” for pursuing such a course, is as just as it would be to doubt the general probity of Livy for a similar practice in the Roman History: and to question his veracity, because the subject of his translation is a record of incredible events, is a degree of hypercriticism which could only have been resorted to by a mind eager to escape conviction. But in this, as in almost everything else which was exposed to the reprobation of Mr. Ritson, there was a secondary design in the back-ground, of more importance than the original proposition; and an unqualified denial of Geoffrey's Armorican original was an indispensable step towards advancing a favourite theory of his own. The substance of this theory may be given in the language of its author: “That the

---

Thus “Beaf and Beir” are not to be “at once rejected as Norse blunders, occurring only in the Fornalder Sög,” as Mr. Kemble (Postscript, p. xiii.) had supposed. Buri, mentioned by him at p. xxv. as a progenitor of Woden, is a name also having some resemblance to Boerinus. Lieding, in the edition of Resenius, may have been the error of a transcriber for Bedwig; as probably Strephus has been for Scepheus, Sternodus either for Itermon or Heremod, and Folcpald in Gale for Folcpalb, who in Nennius takes the place of Godulf. —R. Taylor. The subject has not received so much new illustration as seems to have been anticipated from Thorpe's translation of Lappenberg, 1845, 2 vols. 8vo.]

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Sharon Turner has persevered in his objections to Geoffrey's fidelity: “Several of Jeffery's interspersed observations imply, that he has rather made a book of his own, than merely translated an author. If he merely translated, why should he decline to handle particular points of the history, because Gildas had already told them, or told them better? He assumes here a right of shaping his work as he pleased, as he does also when he declares his intention of relating elsewhere the Armorican emigration.” *Hist. of England*, vol. 1, p. 448. It is difficult to understand why Geoffrey was more or less a “mere” translator for these omissions, or how such a practice could make him an original writer.—The editor has to apologize for not having referred to this interesting work of Mr. Turner's in the early portion of *Warton's History*: but an absence from his native country at the period of its publication, and for some years afterwards, caused him to be unacquainted with its contents. It will be needless to add, how much he might have been benefited personally by an earlier knowledge of its existence, and the trouble he might have been spared in travelling over much of the same ground Mr. Turner has now so agreeably shortened to every future inquirer. While thus reading his confession, the editor will also express his regret at being unacquainted (from the same cause) with a most valuable Essay on the Popular Mythology of the Middle Ages contained in the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1820, and to which his attention was directed by a general reference in a foreign publication, Grimm's *Kinder-Märchen*, [since repeated in the English translation, entitled *German Popular Stories*.—Anon.]

English acquired the art of romance-writing from the French seems clear and certain, as most of the specimens of that art in the former language are palpable and manifest translations of those in the other: and this too may serve to account for the origin of romance in Italy, Spain, Germany and Scandinavia. But the French romances are too ancient to be indebted for their existence to more barbarous nations."<sup>1</sup> With the truth or fallacy of this hypothesis we are not at present concerned. But it will be obvious that its success must at any time have depended upon the degree of credit assigned to the repeated declarations of Geoffrey, and the claims possessed by Armorica to an original property in the British Chronicle.<sup>2</sup> A sweeping contradiction therefore, without the shadow of proof—as if proof in such a case would have been an insult to the reader's understanding—was to destroy every belief in the former; while a constant call for proof, a most vehement "iteration" for the original documents, and an unmeaning speculation upon the physical inabilities of the whole Armorican nation from the ruggedness of their language to cultivate poetry, was to silence every pretension of the latter. A more candid spirit of criticism has at length conceded, that a general charge of imposture unsupported by testimony, or even a showing of some adequate motive for the concealment of the truth, is not to overrule the repeated affirmations of a writer no ways interested in maintaining a false plea; and that, however much the tortuous propensities of one man's mind might incline him to prefer the crooked policy of fraud to the more simple path of plain-dealing, the contagion of such a disease was not likely to extend itself to a long list of authorities, all of whom must have been injured rather than benefited by the confession: who could have had no common motives with the first propounder of the deceit; and who were divided both by time and situation from any connexion with

<sup>1</sup> *Metrical Romances*, i. p. c. It may be as well to subjoin the succeeding paragraph in Mr. Ritson's dissertation, for the benefit of those who can reconcile the contradiction it contains to the doctrine avowed in the passage cited above: "It is, therefore, a vain and futile endeavour to seek for the origin of romance: in all ages and countrys, where literature has been cultivateēd, and genius and taste have inspired, whether in India, Persia, Greece, Italy or France, the earliest product of that cultivation, and that genius and taste, has been poetry and romance, with reciprocal obligations, perhaps, between one country and another. The Arabians, the Persians, the Turks, and, in short, almost every nation in the globe, abound in romances of their own invention."—*Ib. ci.*

<sup>2</sup> There are those who will say, If the Norman minstrels could thus descend to poach upon Armorican ground, they might also have gleaned their intelligence relative to Bevis of Hampton and Guy of Warwick on an English soil. But this again would destroy the sneer against the "historian of English Poetry," who has called these redoubtless champions "English heroes."—"Wis" is a genuine Saxon name occurring in the Chronicle, and *Beo-wis* might be formed on the analogy of *Beo-wulf*. That the Norman minstrels, like their brothers of Germany and Scandinavia, should have sought in every direction for subjects of romantic adventure, will be considered no disparagement to their genius, except by that gentle band of critics who believe that the dramatist who borrows his plot is inferior to the play-wright who invents one.

him, and generally speaking from any intercourse with each other. The concurrent testimony of the French romancers is now admitted to have proved the existence of a large body of fiction relative to Arthur in the province of Brittany: and while they confirm the assertions of Geoffrey in this single particular, it is equally clear they have neither echoed his language, nor borrowed his materials. Every further investigation of the subject only tends to support the opinion pronounced by Mr. Douce, that "the tales of Arthur and his knights which have appeared in so many forms, and under the various titles of the *St. Graal*, *Tristan de Leonnois*, *Lancelot du Lac*, &c., were not immediately borrowed from the work of Geoffrey of Monmouth, but from his Armorick originals."<sup>1</sup>

The great evil with which this long-contested question appears to be threatened at the present day, is an extreme equally dangerous with the incredulity of Mr. Ritson—a disposition to receive as authentic history, under a slightly fabulous colouring, every incident recorded in the British Chronicle. An allegorical interpretation is now inflicted upon all the marvellous circumstances, a forced construction imposed upon the less glaring deviations from probability; and the usual subterfuge of baffled research,—erroneous readings and etymological sophistry—is made to reduce every stubborn and intractable text to something like the consistency required. It might have been expected that the notorious failures of Dionysius and Plutarch in Roman history would have prevented the repetition of an error, which neither learning nor ingenuity can render palatable; and that the havoc and deadly ruin effected by these ancient writers (in other respects so valuable) in one of the most beautiful and interesting monuments of traditional story would have acted as a sufficient corrective on all future aspirants. The favourers of this system might at least have been instructed by the philosophic example of Livy, if it be lawful to ascribe to philosophy a line of conduct which perhaps was prompted by a powerful sense of poetic beauty, that traditional record can only gain in the hands of the future historian by one attractive aid, the grandeur and lofty graces of that incomparable style in which the first Decade is written; and that the best duty towards antiquity, and the most agreeable one towards posterity, is to transmit the narrative received as an unsophisticated tradition, in all the plenitude of its marvels and the awful dignity of its supernatural agency. For however largely we may concede that real events have supplied the substance of any traditive story, yet the amount of absolute facts, and the manner of those facts, the period of their occurrence, the names of the agents, and the locality given to the scene, are all combined upon principles so wholly beyond our knowledge, that it becomes impossible to fix with certainty upon any single point better authenticated than its fellow. Probability in such decisions will often prove the most fallacious guide we

---

<sup>1</sup> See below.

can follow ; for, independently of the acknowledged historical axiom, that “*le vrai n'est pas toujours le vraisemblable*,” innumerable instances might be adduced, where tradition has had recourse to this very probability to confer a plausible sanction upon her most fictitious and romantic incidents.<sup>1</sup> It will be a much more useful labour, wherever it can be effected, to trace the progress of this traditional story in the country where it has become located by a reference to those natural or artificial monuments which are the unvarying sources of fictitious events ;<sup>2</sup> and, by a strict comparison of its details

<sup>1</sup> The story of the doves at Dodona and the origin of the oracle there is too well known to require a repetition. There is a connexion and propriety in the solution given by Herodotus, which on a first perusal carries conviction to the reader's mind. Yet nothing can be more questionable than the whole recital. The honours of the sacred oak were shared in common with Jupiter by Dione, whose symbol, a golden dove, like the golden swallows on the brazen roof of Apollo at Delphi (Pind. *Frag.* vol. iii. p. 54), was seen suspended from the branches of the venerable tree. (Philostrat. *Icon.* ii. 34, p. 858-9.) Hence the tradition. The explanation of the Egyptian priesthood is rendered intelligible by a passage in the *Horapollo* (ii. 32), where it is stated that a black dove was the sacred symbol, under which these people expressed a woman maintaining her widowhood till death. That this obvious source of the Dodonean fable should have yielded to the improbable dictum of the Theban priesthood, will not appear remarkable, when we remember that the same class of men had told Solon, “*You Greeks are always children*” (Plato, *Tim.* p. 22) : and that the Greeks who believed every tale these artful foreigners chose to impose upon them, were proverbial for their admiration of the wondrous out of their own country. (Vid. Paus. ix. c. 36.) This strong predilection for Egyptian marvels did not escape the notice of Heliodorus. *Αιγυπτίων γὰρ ἀποστολα καὶ διάγνωσι πᾶσιν. Εὐλογηθῆ ἀλλοῖς Ἰανθίβρατος.* Lib. ii. p. 92, ed. Coraës. A desire of tracing everything to an Egyptian origin is as conspicuous in the whole body of Grecian story, as the propensity of the middle ages to trace their institutions and genealogic stock to King Priam. According to Sir Stamford Raffles, the Malays universally attempt to trace their descent from Alexander and his followers. *Pamphleteer*, vol. viii.

<sup>2</sup> Higden will inform us how busily tradition works in this way : “*There is a nother sygne and token before ye Popes palays, an horse of bras, and a man sytting theron, and holdeth his right honde as though he spake to the peple, and holdeth his brydell in his lyfte honde, and hath a cucko bytwen his hors heres. And a seke dwarf under his feet. Pylgryms callen that man Theodericus. And the comyns call him Constantinus ; but clerkes of the courte calle hym Marcus and Quintus Curtius. . . . They that calle hym Marcus, telle this reson and skyll. There was a dwarf of the kynred of Messenis, his craft was Nygromancye. Whan he had subdewed kynges that dwelled nyghe hym, and made hem subgette to hym, thenne he wente to Rome, to warre with the Romayns. And with his craft he benam the Romayns power and might for to smyte, and beseged hem longe tyme iclosed within the cyte. This dwarf went every day tofore the sonne ryfyng in to the felde for to do his crafte. Whan the Romayns had espyed that maner doyng of the dwarf, they spake to Marcus, a noble knyght, and behyght hym lordshyp of the cyte, and a memoryall in mynde for evermore, yf he wolde defende hem and save the cyte. Thenne Marcus made an hole throughe the walle, longe er it were daye, for to abyde his crafte to cache this dwarf. And whan it was tyme, the cucko sang, and warned hym of the daye. Thenne Marcus reyfed to, and bycause he myght not hytthe the dwarf with wepen, he caught hym with his honde, and bare hym into the cyte. And for drede leste he sholde helpe hymselfe with his craft yf he myght speke, he threwe hym undir the hors feet, and the horse al to trade hym. And therfor that ymage was made in remembraunce of this dede.*” Then follows the account of those who called it Q. Curtius. *Trevisa's Translation*, p. 24.

with the analogous memorials of other nations, to separate those elements which are obviously of native growth from the occurrences bearing the impress of a foreign origin.<sup>1</sup> We shall gain little perhaps by such a course for the history of human events; but it will be an important accession to our stock of knowledge on the history of the human mind. It will infallibly display, as in the analysis of every similar record, the operation of that refining principle which is ever obliterating the monotonous deeds of violence that fill the chronicle of a nation's early career, and exhibit the brightest attribute in the catalogue of man's intellectual endowments—a glowing and vigorous imagination,—bestowing upon all the impulses of the mind a splendour and virtuous dignity which, however fallacious historically considered, are never without a powerfully redeeming good, the ethical tendency of all their lessons.

The character of the specimens interspersed throughout *Warton's History* is a subject of more immediate moment, as it is intimately connected with a question which must be previously adjusted, before we can hope to see any advances towards a history of the English language. The most zealous friend of his fame will readily admit, that his extracts from our early poetry have not been made with that attention to the orthography of his manuscripts, which the example and authority of Mr. Ritson have since established as an indispensable law. There are occasional<sup>2</sup> instances also, where inadvertency has produced some confusion of the sense by erroneous readings of his text; and a few errors involving the same results, from indistinctness in the manuscript, or the difficulty of deciphering correctly some unusual or obsolete term. For the last of these deficiencies no further justification will be offered, than that they are of a kind which every publisher of early poetry must be more or less exposed to; that they are neither so important nor so numerous as they are usually considered; and that some allowance is due to the lax opinions entertained upon the subject when *Warton's History* made its appearance. The former will require a more minute investigation, both from the obloquy cast upon his reputation for omitting to observe it, and the importance it has been made to assume in the labours of every subsequent antiquary. The golden rule of Mr. Ritson, enforced by the precept and example of twenty years, and scrupulously adhered to by his disciples, is “integrity to

<sup>1</sup> The manner in which national fable swelled its mass of incident in the ancient world, by having recourse to this practice has been already noticed at page (29). With the Greeks and Romans, every hero whom they found celebrated in a foreign soil for his prowess against wild beasts, robbers, or tyrants, was their own divinity Hercules; and every traveller who had touched on a distant coast, Ulysses. This system of appropriating the native traditions of their neighbours was not confined to the ancients. The followers of King Sigurd Iorlafar, who visited Constantinople in the year 1111, on their return from the holy land, brought an account to Norway, that they had seen the images of their early kings the *Ase*, the *Volsungæ*, and the *Giukings* erected in the Hippodrome of the Imperial city. *Heimskringla*, vol. iii. p. 245.

<sup>2</sup> [Mr. Richard Taylor proposed to read *frequent*.]

the original text" The genius of the language, the qualifications of the transcriber, and the power of oral delivery upon the original writer, have been considered so subsidiary to this primary and elemental point, that they are scarcely noticed, or wholly omitted, in the discussion of the question. Everything written has had conferred upon it the authority of an explicit statute, and fidelity to the letter of a manuscript is only to be infringed under certain obvious limitations. There might have been something to colour the rigid course thus prescribed, if it had been either proved or found that there was a general consistency observed in any single manuscript with itself, or that the various modes of writing the same word in one document were countenanced by a systematic mode of deviation in another. But so far is this from being the case, that a single line often exhibits a change in the component letters of the same word (and which may have been written in the previous pages with every variety it is capable of); and no diligence or ingenuity can establish a rule, which will reconcile the orthography of one manuscript to that of its fellow upon any principle of order or grammatical analogy. There is, however, nothing singular in this state of our early English texts, or of a nature not to admit of a comparatively easy solution. By far the greater number of these discrepancies may be fairly ascribed to the inattention of transcribers, a class of men whose heedless blunders have cast a proverbial stigma upon their labours, and who, to pass over the charges left against them by the ancient world, have been successively exposed to the anathemas of Orm and the censures of Chaucer. For the rest, we must refer to the circumstances under which the original documents were written, or the autographs were dismissed from the hands of their respective authors.

At whatever age we assume the subject, subsequent to the Norman conquest and previous to the invention of printing, the very absence of this most important of human arts might of itself assure us, that the forms of orthography would be more or less fluctuating, from the total want of any considerable number of copies following one general principle in the composition of their words. There never could have been, as at the present day, any multiplied exemplars of the same work, the literal fac-similes of each other, and consequently the reciprocal guarantees of their respective integrity and fidelity to the original text; nor any acknowledged standard of appeal which was to direct the mind in cases of dubious issue. Hence every writer would of course adopt the general style acquired during his school instruction; and where this chanced to be defective, he would naturally fly to analogy as the best arbitrator of his doubts. Now, though nothing is more certain than that the existing laws of our language are the consequences of some antecedent ones, and that all are governed by an analogy systematic in its constitution; yet nothing also is more clear than that, unless we pursue this analogy according to its governing principle, it will lead us to the most erroneous and indefensible conclusions. Let any one

for example assume some particular letters as the unvarying representatives of any determinate sound, and having applied them in conjunction with the remaining symbols making up the different words in which this sound recurs, compare his novel mode of association with that generally received. The result will give him a language strongly resembling the written compositions of all our early manuscripts, with one grand distinction—that, though this kind of analogy has been chiefly followed, it was never systematically adhered to; and that the exceptions to the rule have been hardly less numerous than the cases in which it has been applied. This we may readily conceive to have arisen from the influence of the style acquired enforcing one kind of analogy, and the unbiased judgment of the writer,—unbiased except by the natural power of oral delivery—giving direction to another. The latter indeed must have been the universal guide in all cases of uncertainty, and for the reason before given both a varying and unsatisfactory one. In addition to these difficulties, there was another co-operating cause, which will of itself explain a large body of minor variations. The study of the English language, in common with that of every vernacular dialect in Europe, was the offspring of comparatively recent ages; and of the component parts which fill the measure of this study, orthography was nearly the last to occupy public attention. That it would have followed in the order of time without the invention of printing, is clear from the attention bestowed upon it by the ancient world.<sup>1</sup> But it never could have demanded any share of serious notice, until the literature of the country had been to a certain degree matured, until grammar as a science had become sedulously pursued, and the labours of grammarians had established certain rules of orthoëpy, which every writer would have willingly followed. From a combination of these causes, therefore, the unsettled state of early orthography is easily deducible. The confusion it has originated will be evident on the perusal of a single page in Mr. Ritson's Romances: but the corollary which has been drawn from it, that the manuscripts exhibit a text whose integrity ought invariably to be preserved, can only be admitted under a presumption that the enunciation of those who wrote them was as fluctuating as their graphic forms. The latter proposition is an inevitable consequence of the previous inference, and is a position in itself so unwarrantable and incredible, that it needs only to be considered with reference to its practicability, to receive the condemnation it merits.

It is true, a great deal of traditional opinion might be cited in favour of such an hypothesis, and several distinguished writers of our own day have been found to lend it the countenance of their names. Mr. Mitford has declared, that the *Brut of Lazamon* displays “all the appearance of a language thrown into confusion by the circum-

---

<sup>1</sup> The state of our Anglo-Saxon manuscripts and the labours of *Ælfric* alone might be cited in proof of these positions.

stances of those who spoke it;”<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Sharon Turner has observed of our language in a still earlier stage: “the Saxon anomalies of grammar seem to have been so capricious and so confused, that their meaning must have been often rather conjectured than understood; and hence it is that their poetry, especially in *Beowulf*, is often so unintelligible to us. There is no settled grammar to guarantee the meaning; we cannot guess so well nor so rapidly as they who, talking every day in the same phrases, were familiar with their own absurdities. Or perhaps when the harper recited, they often caught his meaning from his gesticulation, felt it when they did not understand it, and thought obscurity to be the result of superior ability.”<sup>2</sup> It will be no disparagement to the talents of these distinguished historians, that a subject unconnected with the general tenor of their studies, and only incidentally brought before them, should have eluded their penetration; or that a plausible theory, rather extensively accredited, should have surprised them into an acquiescence in its doctrines. But when it is asserted, under the authority of a name so deservedly esteemed as Mr. Mitford’s, that political disturbances have produced a corresponding confusion in the structure of a nation’s language, and that a disjointed time has been found to subvert the whole economy of a dialect, we are in justice bound to inquire, by what law of our nature these singular results ensue, and in what degree the example given will warrant such a conclusion. We may readily grant the learned advocate of this hypothesis any state of civil confusion he

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Mitford’s *Harmony of Language*. The expressions in the text have been taken from Mr. Campbell’s citation, in his *Essay on English Poetry*, p. 33: where the reader will also find an able refutation of Mr. Ellis’s opinions upon the progress of the English language. It is impossible that Mr. Campbell should not at all times be awake to the spirit of genuine poetry, however disguised by the rust of antiquity. And if some of the criticisms in this genial Essay prove rather startling to the zealous admirer of our early literature, he will rather attribute them to the same cause which during an age of romantic poetry makes the effusions of Mr. Campbell’s muse appear an echo of the chaste simplicity and measured energy of Attic song. [In the edition of 1840, Mr. R. Taylor pointed with satisfaction to the publication of *Lazamon’s Brut* by Sir F. Madden, which, however, did not appear till 1847; to the *Relique Antique* of Messrs. Halliwell and Wright (of which a revised edition is now a desideratum), and to the committal of the *Codex Exonensis* to the editorial care of Mr. Thorpe. The last-named was printed, 1842, 8vo.]

<sup>2</sup> *History of England*, vol. i. p. 564. All opinions of this kind are evidently founded upon the belief, that language is the product of man’s invention; and that the succession of time alone has perfected the first crude conceptions of his mind. To such a belief we may apply the argument opposed to those, who conceive the human race to have grown out of the earth like so many cabbages. Bring forward your proof that this phenomenon had a real existence, and your reasons for its discontinuance. Both propositions are equally defensible, and entitled to the same degree of credence. It is a common piece of address with the favourers of this theory, to refer us to the language of some savage Indian tribe, of whom we know as much as the traveller has been pleased to inform us. The personal qualifications of the latter to speak upon the question we have no means of deciding. In a parallel case, Dr. Johnson justly charged Montelqueu with want of fairness, for deducing a general principle from some observance obtaining in Mexico or Japan, it might be for which he could adduce no better authority than the vague account of some traveller whom accident had taken there.

chooses to assume, in the ages immediately following upon the Norman conquest; and still, with every advantage of this concession, the position he has adopted must preserve all the native nakedness of its character. For, until it shall be shown that political commotions have a decided tendency to derange the intellectual and physical powers in the same degree that they disorganize civil society, and that, under the influence of troubled times, men are prone to forget the natural means of communicating their ideas, to falter in their speech, and recur to the babble of their infancy, we certainly have not advanced beyond the threshold of the argument. That such effects have ever occurred from the cause alleged in any previous age, remains yet to be demonstrated; that they do not occur in the existing state of society, —that they are not therefore the necessary results of any acknowledged law of our nature,—the experience of the last thirty years of European warfare and political change may at least serve as a testimony.

An influx of foreigners, or a constant intercourse with and dependence upon them, may corrupt the idiom of a dialect to a limited extent, or charge it with a large accumulation of exotic terms; but this change in the external relation of the people speaking the dialect will neither confound the original elements of which it is composed, nor destroy the previous character of its grammar. The *lingua franca*, as it is called, of the shores washed by the Mediterranean sea contains an admixture of words requiring all the powers of an erudite linguist to trace the several ingredients to their parent sources; yet with all the corruptions and innovations to which this oddly assorted dialect has been subjected, it invariably acknowledges the laws of Italian grammar. A similar inundation of foreign terms is to be found in the German writers of the seventeenth century, where the mass of Latin, Greek and French expressions almost exceeds the number of vernacular words: yet here again the stranger-matter has been made to accommodate itself to the same inflections and modal changes as those which govern the native stock. In considering the language of Lazamon, however, there is no necessity for having recourse to this line of argument. In the specimen published by Mr. Ellis not a Gallicism is to be found, nor even a Norman term: and so far from exhibiting any “appearance of a language thrown into confusion by the circumstances of those who spoke it,” nearly every important form of Anglo-Saxon grammar is rigidly adhered to; and so little was the language altered at this advanced period of Norman influence, that a few slight variations might convert it into genuine Anglo-Saxon. That some change had taken place in the style of composition and general structure of the language since the days of Alfred, is a matter beyond dispute; but that these mutations were a consequence of the Norman invasion, or were even accelerated by that event, is wholly incapable of proof; and nothing is supported upon a firmer principle of rational induction, than that the same effects would have ensued if William and his followers had remained on their native soil. The substance of the change is admitted on all hands to consist

in the suppression of those grammatical intricacies occasioned by the inflection of nouns, the seemingly arbitrary distinctions of gender, the government of prepositions,<sup>1</sup> &c. How far this may be considered as the result of an innate law of the language, or some general law in the organization of those who spoke it, we may leave for the present undecided: but that it was no way dependent upon external circumstances, upon foreign influence or political disturbances, is established by this undeniable fact, that every branch of the Low German stock, whence the Anglo-Saxon sprang, displays the same simplification of its grammar. In all these languages, there has been a constant tendency to relieve themselves of that precision which chooses a fresh symbol for every shade of meaning, to lessen the amount of nice distinctions, and detect, as it were, a royal road to the interchange of opinion. Yet in thus diminishing their grammatical forms and simplifying their rules, in this common effort to evince a striking contrast to the usual effects of civilization, all confusion has been prevented by the very manner in which the operation has been conducted: for the revolution produced has been so gradual in its progress, that it is only to be discovered on a comparison of the respective languages at periods of a considerable interval.

The opinions of Mr. Turner<sup>2</sup> upon the character of the Anglo-Saxon

<sup>1</sup> [A similar revolution took place in the Greek language, in the decline of the Byzantine empire, as has been noticed by Dr. Priestley, Lecture xiv., on the Theory of Language; also by A. W. Schlegel in his *Observations sur la Langue Provençale*, 1818, p. 13, where he terms it a change from the synthetic to the analytic form, answering to Priestley's divisions into complex and simple.—R. Taylor.]

<sup>2</sup> It would take a much greater space, to offer a detailed refutation of Mr. Turner's opinions, than is occupied in the original recital of them. But in a future publication, when examining Mr. Tyrwhitt's *Essay on the Language and Verification of Chaucer*, the editor pledges himself to substantiate by the most irrefragable proofs all that he has advanced. In the present state of the question, he can only appeal to the common sense and daily experience of the reader, coupled with an assurance that the counsel and practice of Junius and Hickes are directly opposed to this novel theory. It may be as well perhaps to offer one instance out of a thousand, in proof of the assistance to be gained by a knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon grammar. The following passage, as it stands in our present text, is false in its grammatical construction and defective in alliteration:

“ Gif thu Grendles dearft  
Night longne  
Fyrstne anbidan.”

Mr. Turner's translation :

“ If thou darest the Grendel  
The space of a long night  
Awaits thee.”

Restore the grammar, and we obtain the alliteration, without changing a letter of the text.

“ Gif thu Grendles dearft  
Night-longne fyrt  
Nean bidan.

If thou darest Grendles (encounter *getting*, of the context)  
(A) night long space  
Near abide.”

language might be safely left to the decision of the practical inquirer who, without allowing himself to be dazzled by the brilliancy of an abstract speculation, or to be swayed by the influence of a long-established prejudice, considers every theory with reference to man in society. To him we might appeal for the solution of our doubts, as to the possibility of conducting the commonest concerns of life with these imperfect means of communicating our wants; or how the Babel-like confusion attendant upon a people, who had "no settled grammar to guarantee their meaning, who were compelled to guess the import of their mutual absurdities," was not to involve a second dissolution of the social compact and another separation of the families of the earth so visited. But fortunately Mr. Turner, in the same spirit of candour that attends all his investigations, has supplied us with the proofs upon which his conclusions are grounded; and in so doing has afforded us the most satisfactory means of producing a refutation of his opinions. It may appear surprising, but it is nevertheless true, that of the numerous specimens adduced in support of the "capricious anomalies" to be found in Saxon grammar, not a single instance occurs which is not rigidly in unison with the laws of that grammar: and so strikingly consistent is the obedience they display to the rules there enforced, that any future historian of the language might select the same examples in proof of a contrary position. He would only have to apprise the reader of some peculiarities in those laws, which Mr. Turner seems to have misunderstood, or not to have been acquainted with; and to inform him that the simple rule observed in our own times respecting the genders of nouns was not acknowledged in Saxon grammar, and consequently that in this department there was a greater degree of complexity: that the inflection of nouns was governed by no single norm, but varied as in the languages of the ancient world; that every class embraced in this same part of speech was not alike perfectly inflected; that some exhibit a change of termination in almost every case, while others approach the simplicity of our present forms, having only a change in the genitive; that a difference in the sense produced a change in the government of the prepositions;<sup>1</sup> and lastly, that the adjective was differently inflected, as it was used in conjunction with the definite or indefinite article. With these observances, a reader unacquainted with a single line of Anglo-Saxon, and only assisted by the paradigm of declensions contained in any grammar, might reduce Mr. Turner's anomalies to their original order, and collect from the regularity with which they conform to the standards given the general spirit of uniformity that obtained throughout the language. Indeed there is nothing more striking, or more interesting to the ardent philologer, than the order and regularity preserved in Anglo-Saxon composition, the variety of expression, the innate richness and plastic power with which the language is endowed; and there

---

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Turner has noticed this peculiarity, but then he has denied that it was systematically observed; which is the point at issue.

are few things more keenly felt by the student of Northern literature, or a mind strongly alive to the same qualities as they are retained in the language of Germany, than that all these excellencies should have disappeared in our own. But it will be better to remain silent on a subject of such vain regret, and to avail ourselves of the only advantage to be derived from the knowledge of it. It is capable of demonstration, that in the golden days of Anglo-Saxon literature, the æra of Alfred, the language of *written* composition was stable in its character, and to all appearance continued so till the cultivation of it among the learned became no longer an object of emulation. The mutations that ensued, it has been already asserted, were not the result of any capricious feeling, acknowledging no general principle of action, but a revolution effected upon certain and determinate laws which, however undefined in their origin, are sufficiently evident in their consequences. The general result has been a language whose grammatical rules have been long ascertained, at least in every particular bearing upon the present subject; and we are thus supplied with two unvarying standards of appeal at the extremes of the inquiry. Now, in such a state of the question, it will be obvious that every word which has retained to our own times the orthography bestowed upon it by the Anglo-Saxons must during the intervening periods have preserved in the enunciation a general similarity of sound; and that however differently it may be written, or whatever additional letters or variations of them may have been conferred upon it by transcribers, there could have been only one legitimate form of its orthography. The changes introduced could only have been caused by an attempt to reconcile the orthography with the sounds emitted in delivery, and ought not to be considered as in any degree indicative of a fluctuation in the mode of pronouncing them. In another numerous class of words, it is equally clear that a change of orthography from the Anglo-Saxon forms has arisen solely from the abolition of the accentual marks which distinguished the long and short syllables. As a substitute for the former, the Norman scribes, or at least the disciples of the Norman school of writing, had recourse to the analogy which governed the French language; and to avoid the confusion which would have sprung from observing the same form in writing a certain number of letters differently enounced and bearing a different meaning, they elongated the word or attached, as it were, an accent instead of superscribing it. Hence has emanated an extensive list of terms, having final e's and duplicate consonants, which were no more the representatives of additional syllables, than the acute or grave accent in the Greek language is a mark of metrical quantity.<sup>1</sup> Of those variations which arose from elision, a change in the enunciation, or the adoption of a new combination of letters for the same sound, it is

<sup>1</sup> The converse of this can only be maintained, under an assumption that the Anglo-Saxon words of one syllable multiplied their numbers after the conquest, and in some succeeding century subsided into their primitive simplicity.

impossible to speak briefly, and a diligent comparison of our early texts, and a clear understanding of the analogies which have prevailed in the constitution of words, can alone enable us to speak decisively. But with this knowledge before us of the real state of the question, it is high time to relieve ourselves of the arbitrary restrictions imposed by a critic wholly ignorant of the first principles by which language is regulated; whose acquaintance with the fountain head of “English *undefiled*” induced him to call it “a meagre and barren jargon which was incapable of discharging its functions, (though possessing all the natural copiousness and plastic power of the Greek);” and whose love for the lore itself seems rather to have arisen from a blind admiration of those barbaric innovations which make it repulsive to the scholar and the man of taste, than from any feeling of the excellencies that adorn it.<sup>1</sup> The trammels of the Ritsonian school can only perpetuate error by justifying the preconceived notions of “confusion and anomalies” from the very documents that ought to contain a refutation of such opinions; and we can never hope to obtain a legitimate series of specimens, duly illustrating the rise and progress of the language, till we recur to the same principles in establishing our texts that have been observed by every editor of a Greek or Roman classic. With such a system for our guide, we may expect to see the natural order which prevailed in the enunciation of the language restored to the pages recording it, and an effectual check imposed upon the “multiplying spawn” of reprints which, in addition to all the errors preserved in the first impression from the manuscript, uniformly present us with the further mistakes of the typographer. Whether such a principle was felt by Warton, in the substitution he has made of more recent forms in his text for the unsettled orthography of his manuscripts, must now be a fruitless inquiry; but we shall have no difficulty in convincing ourselves, that his specimens would have been more intelligible to the age in which they were written, if enounced by a modern, than the transcripts of Mr. Ritson with all their scrupulous fidelity.

The glossarial notes of Warton form so small a portion of his labours, that they would not have required a distinct enumeration, had they not been made the subject of Mr. Ritson's animadversion. That they constituted no essential part of his undertaking, that his general views of our early poetry and his opinions upon the respective merits of our poets would have been as accurate and perspicuous without subjoining a single glossarial illustration, or failing to thrice the extent in which he has committed himself, will be felt by any liberal critic who will take the trouble of examining how few of

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ritson has thus spoken of Dr. Percy's corrections of the *Reliques of English Poetry*: “The purchasers and peruseurs of such a collection are deceive'd and impose'd upon; the pleasure they receive is derive'd from the idea of antiquity, which in fact is perfect illusion!” There is no parrying an objection of this kind which, forcible as it may be, is not quite original. It is the language of that worthy gentleman M. la Rancune in the *Roman Comique*, troisième partie, c. 9.

Warton's positions are affected by these deficiencies. The amount of obsolete terms in any early writer bears so small a proportion to the general mass of his matter, that his genius might be appreciated, and his excellencies pourtrayed, by a person unable to refer to a single gloss on the text. The assistance thus acquired may develop particular beauties, or give a firmer comprehension of their effect; but the poetry which depends for its merit upon the felicity of single phrases, whose import is only to be gathered from isolated terms, can scarcely suffer by our want of ability to detect its disjointed meaning. For every purpose of an historian, Warton's skill in glossography was certainly sufficient; and, if not co-extensive with the vaunted requirements of his opponent, it will hardly rank him lower in the scale of such attainments than the place allotted his adversary. There are few men at the present day who have given their attention to this subject, that will think otherwise than lightly of the "utmost care observed in the glossary" to the Metrical Romances; and no one who has advanced to any proficiency in the study, who will not readily acknowledge the easy nature of such labours, how little of success is to be considered as the result of mental energy, the effort of genius rather than passive industry.

It now only remains to give an account of the plan upon which the present edition has been conducted. The text of Warton has been scrupulously preserved with the exception of a few unimportant corrections, of which notice is given by the interpolations being printed within brackets. The specimens of early poetry have been either collated with MSS. in the British Museum, or copied from editions of acknowledged fidelity, and the glossarial notes corrected wherever the editor's ability was equal to the task. But less attention has been directed to this latter subject than would otherwise have been bestowed upon it, from an intention long entertained of giving a general glossary to the whole work, which should embrace Warton's numerous omissions. The additional notes are such as appeared necessary, either for illustration or emendation of the subjects noticed: but the editor was early taught that the former would comprise a small part of his duties, since, however lavish Warton may appear in the communication of his matter, it will be obvious to any one who will trace him through his authorities, that he has been parsimonious rather than prodigal in the use of his resources. With such a hint, it was therefore considered incumbent to give no additional illustration which could by possibility have been within his knowledge. To the First Dissertation such notes have been added as could be conveniently introduced without interfering with Warton's theory; the second is so complete in itself, that the editor has been unable to detect in the more recent labours of Eichhorn, Heeren, Turner and Berrington, any omission which may not be considered as intentional. The third relates to a subject of which Warton has rather uncovered the surface than explored the depths, and which, notwithstanding the subsequent and important labours of Mr. Douce, still awaits a further investigation. In this edition, however, it has been made to follow

those originally prefixed by Warton to his first volume, from a conviction that it will be found equally useful in preparing the reader's mind for the topics discussed in the succeeding pages.

But though thus compelled to speak of his own labours as first in the order of time, and with reference to the disposition of the work, the editor has the pleasing task of communicating that the most important contributions to these volumes have flowed from other sources. Nearly the whole of Warton's first and second volume had been sent to the press when the publisher acquired by purchase the papers of Mr. Park, a gentleman whose general acquaintance with early English literature is too well known to need remark, and whose attention for many years has been directed to an improved edition of the History of English Poetry. Among the accessions thus obtained were found some valuable remarks by Mr. Ritson, Mr. Douce, an extract of everything worthy of notice in the copious notes of Dr. Ashby,<sup>1</sup> and an extensive body of illustrations either collected or written by Mr. Park, of which it would be presumption in a person [as] little qualified as their present editor to offer an opinion.<sup>2</sup> For this portion of the edition, indeed, Mr. Park may be considered responsible, as the editor's notes were withdrawn wherever they touched upon a common subject, and those remaining are too few to need any specific mention. It would have been more agreeable if such an opportunity had presented itself in an earlier stage of the work; but however much might have been gained by having the same information communicated in a more pleasing form, this was not thought sufficient to countervail the objection that might have been brought against the work for its extensive repetitions. Wherever therefore Mr. Park's remarks on the previous volumes referred to a common subject without supplying any further illustration of it, they have been suppressed: but this, with the exception of a few animadversions of a sectarian tendency, and one or two notes copied from other writers, and obviously inaccurate, forms the whole that has been withdrawn from the public eye.

In the progress of his duties, a variety of subjects presented themselves to the editor's mind, as requiring some further illustration than could be lawfully comprised within the limits of a note; and under this impression he more than once ventured to promise a further discussion of the points at issue, in some subsequent part of the work. But the materials connected with these topics have so grown under his hands, that he has been compelled to relinquish the intention, and to reserve for a separate and future undertaking the inquiries to which they relate. The promised account of the distinctions of dialect in

<sup>1</sup> The papers of Dr. Ashby were also purchased at the same time (at no small expense); but they were not found to contain anything of consequence which had not been previously used by Mr. Park.

<sup>2</sup> [These notes, where it appeared desirable to retain them at all, which was by no means (in the present state of our information, always the case) have of course been now placed in their proper order.]

the Anglo-Saxon language, and the state of their poetry,<sup>1</sup> has been in part withheld for the same reasons; and partly from a knowledge subsequently obtained that the subject was in much better hands. A volume containing numerous specimens of Anglo-Saxon poetry, with translations and illustrations by the Rev. J. J. Conybeare [was published in 1826, 8vo.]

---

<sup>1</sup> The Anglo-Saxon ode given *infra*, will be considered a substitute perhaps for this omission.







## [ FIVE ] DISSERTATIONS:

1. OF THE ORIGIN OF ROMANTIC FICTION IN EUROPE.
2. [ON THE LAIS OF MARIE DE FRANCE.]
3. ON THE INTRODUCTION OF LEARNING INTO ENGLAND.
4. ON THE GESTA ROMANORUM.
5. [ON THE SEVEN SAGES.]







## I.

# Of the Origin of Romantic Fiction in Europe.<sup>1</sup>



HAT peculiar and arbitrary species of fiction which we commonly call romantic, was entirely unknown to the writers of Greece and Rome.<sup>2</sup> It appears to have been imported into Europe by a people, whose modes of thinking and habits of invention are not natural to that country. It is generally supposed to have been borrowed from

<sup>1</sup> [Warton's theories on the origin of romantic fiction are founded on a confusion of ideas as well as on the absence of a large knowledge of the subject, and this is the case with some of his critics and commentators also. The romance is confounded with the novel. In every race and branch of the race, no doubt, there were cherished mythic histories of the race itself in its supposed first beginning, of its great regal and princely families, and of the families of its chieftains. These were formed into poems, and chanted in the halls of the princes and chieftains on festive occasions; and in the changes through which they went in the course of ages and of national revolutions, became naturally more mythic. Out of them arose all the great mediæval romances. There existed also among all peoples an infinite number of stories, which are found identical in the different branches of the same family, and this, though they have nothing to do with the race itself, is a proof of their great antiquity in that race. They are something like language itself, means of mental communication in primitive ages. Out of these arose, in course of time, fables and tales, and, as literature became more refined, novels. Even this class of romance was not introduced into our western popular literature until a comparatively late period, not long before the middle ages began to take into their bosom the Grecian and Latin stories, of the Iliad, of the Argonauts, of Alexander, &c. The notion of Romance having been introduced into the west by the Arabs is quite out of the question. In Greece of course the national romance was that to which belonged the histories of Troy, of the Argonauts, of Hercules, Hector, Achilles, &c., and the novels were represented to a certain degree by the writings of Heliodorus, Xenophon, Achilles Tatius, &c., belonging to a much later literature. These two combined may be considered as the origin of mediæval fiction.—*Wright*. Many interesting remarks on the subject here treated may be found in Mr. Wright's monograph on St. Patrick's Purgatory, 1844.]

<sup>2</sup> ["It cannot be true," says Ritson, "that romance was entirely unknown to

the Arabians.<sup>1</sup> But this origin has not been hitherto perhaps examined or ascertained with a sufficient degree of accuracy. It is my present design, by a more distinct and extended enquiry than has yet been applied to the subject, to trace the manner and the period of its introduction into the popular belief, the oral poetry, and the literature, of the Europeans.

It is an established maxim of modern criticism, that the fictions of Arabian imagination were communicated to the western world by means of the Crusades. Undoubtedly those expeditions greatly contributed to propagate this mode of fabling in Europe. But it is evident (although a circumstance which certainly makes no material difference as to the principles here established), that these fancies were introduced at a much earlier period. The Saracens or Arabians, having been for some time seated on the northern coasts of Africa, entered Spain about the beginning of the eighth century.<sup>2</sup> Of this country they soon effected a complete conquest: and imposing their religion, language and customs upon the inhabitants, erected a royal seat in the capital city of Cordova.<sup>3</sup>

---

the writers of Greece and Rome; since, without considering the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, &c., in that point of view, we have many ancient compositions, which clearly fall within that denomination: as the pastoral of *Daphnis and Chloe* by Longus; the *Ethiopicks* of Heliodorus; Xenophon's *Ephesian History*, &c., &c. *MS. note in Dr. Raine's copy of Warton's History, purchased from Ritson's library.* To these recollections Mr. Douce has added the romance of Apuleius; the *Loves of Clitophon and Leucippe*, by Achilles Tatius; and the very curious *Adventures of Rhodanæs and Sinonis*, or the Babylonian Romance, of which an epitome is preserved by Photius in his *Bibliotheca*, cod. xciv. "This," says Mr. D., "is perhaps the oldest work of the kind, being composed by one Iamblicus, who lived under Marcus Aurelius." "The progress of romance and the state of learning in the middle ages (says Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*) are illustrated by Mr. Thomas Warton with the taste of a poet and the minute diligence of an antiquarian. I have derived much instruction from the two learned dissertations prefixed to the first volume of his *History of English Poetry*."—Park. The above is a mere cavil of Mr. Ritson's, who could not believe a scholar of Warton's attainments to have been unacquainted with these erotic novels. Several of them are mentioned in a later place. In the dissertation on Romance and Minstrelsy, Warton is even reproached for describing another—the *Loves of Clitophon and Leucippe*—as a "poetical novel of Greece." In fact, it is manifest from this expression, that Warton chose to exclude this and similar productions from the title of *romantic fictions*.—Price. The whole of this essay is extremely illogical and unsatisfactory. Warton's leading position, respecting the influence of Arabic literature in Europe, is unsound, and most of the proofs which he alleges are matters which require proving themselves. The two poems of *Beowulf* and the *Nibelungen Lied* are a complete practical refutation of his entire system.—Garnett].

<sup>1</sup> [See Huet, *Traité de l' Origine des Romans*, who has discussed this opinion at large.—Douce. "Nothing can be more erroneous than the attempt to trace the origin of romantic literature to one particular source, be that source either Eastern, or Gothic, or Grecian, for each of these have [has] formed the ground of different hypotheses, which have been supported with equal ingenuity and perseverance."—Wright.]

<sup>2</sup> See *Almakin*, edit. Erpenius, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> [The conquest of Spain by the Arabians becomes one of the most curious and important events recorded in history, when it is considered as having in a great degree contributed to the progress of civilization in Europe, and to the diffusion of

That by means of this establishment they first revived the sciences of Greece in Europe, will be proved at large in another place :<sup>1</sup> and it is obvious to conclude, that at the same time they disseminated those extravagant inventions which were so peculiar to their romantic and creative genius. A manuscript cited by Du Cange acquaints us that the Spaniards, soon after the irruption of the Saracens, entirely neglected the study of the Latin language, and, captivated with the novelty of the oriental books imported by these strangers, suddenly adopted an unusual pomp of style and an affected elevation of diction.<sup>2</sup> The ideal tales of these Eastern invaders, recommended by a brilliancy of description, a variety of imagery, and an exuberance of invention, hitherto unknown and unfamiliar to the cold and barren conceptions of a western climate, were eagerly caught up and universally diffused. From Spain, by the communications of a constant commercial intercourse through the ports of Toulon and Marseilles, they soon passed into France and Italy.

In France, no province or district seems to have given these fictions of the Arabians a more welcome or a more early reception than the inhabitants of Armorica<sup>3</sup> or Basse-Bretagne, now Britany ; for no part of France can boast so great a number of ancient romances.<sup>4</sup> Many poems of high antiquity, composed by the Armorican bards, still remain, and are frequently cited by Father Lobineau in his learned history of Basse-Bretagne.<sup>5</sup> [In the British Museum<sup>6</sup> is

science and art. (See this illustrated in the Arabian Antiquities of Spain, by J. C. Murphy). "But there is evidence, though not the most satisfactory," says Mr. Douce, "that the fabulous stories of Arthur and his Knights existed either among the French or English Britons before the conquest of Spain by the Arabians."—*Park.*]

<sup>1</sup> See the [third] Dissertation. [I think at the present day, no well informed scholar would argue for the Arabian origin of mediæval romance.—*Wright.*]

<sup>2</sup> "Arabico eloquio sublimati," &c. Du Cang. *Gloss. Med. Inf. Latinitat.* tom. i. *Præf.* p. xxvii. *sect. 31.*

<sup>3</sup> [From *Ar y-môr ucha*, i.e. on the upper sea. See Jones's *Relicks of the Welsh Bards.*—*Park.*]

<sup>4</sup> The reason on which this conclusion is founded will appear hereafter. ["It is difficult," says Mr. Douce, "to conceive, that the people of Britany could have been influenced by the Arabians at any period."—*Park.*]

<sup>5</sup> *Histoire de Bretagne*, tom. ii. [Mr. Ritson says he repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, examined Lobineau for these citations, and that Mr. Douce had equally failed in discovering them.—*Price.*]

<sup>6</sup> [Douce's *Addition.* See Dissertation II. Marie is not mentioned in Le Grand's catalogue, though he has modernised and published her *Fables* in French, from King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon version of *Æsop*. That she had written lays seems not to have been known to him. M. de la Rue has given a list of her lays in *Archæol.* vol. xiii. p. 42. [But see Roquefort's edition of the *Poësies*, p. 182.] They are twelve in number, and one of them contains 1184 verses. She also wrote a history or tale in French verse, of St. Patrick's Purgatory [which is included in Roquefort's edition ; two other versions exist in the British Museum (MS. Cott. Dom. A. iv. fol. 258, and MS. Harl. 273, fol. 191, 8vo). One of these was translated or paraphrased into English, of which version there is a MS. in the Auchinleck volume ; this copy was printed in 1837. But see Wright's *St. Patrick's Purgatory*, 1844, p. 61. "An Icelandic translation of these Lays exists

a set of old French tales of chivalry in verse,<sup>1</sup> written by Marie de France. In one of these *lais* she names herself, and says that most

in the Library at Upsala. See Warton's Note *infra*, and *Notices des MSS. dans les Bibliothèques de Suede*. Par M. A. Geoffroy, 8vo. 1855."—*Madden.*]

[Mr. Ellis, in his specimens of early English metrical romances, has introduced an abstract or analysis of the lays of Marie, which he informs us that Ritson either neglected to read, or was unable to understand; since he denied their Armorican origin. See his observations, vol. i. p. 137. Mr. Way published an elegant version of the first of these *lays* (Guigemar) in his *Fabliaux*; and Mr. Ellis printed an early translation of the third (Lai le Fresne) from the Auchinleck MS. in his *Romance Specimens*.—*Park.*]

*Tristram a Wales* is mentioned, f. 171, b :

"Tristram ki bien saveit Harpeir."

In the adventure of the knight Eliduc, f. 172, b :

"En Bretaine ot un chevalier  
Pruz, è curteis, hardi, è fier."

Again, under the same champion, f. 173 :

"Il tient sun chemin tut avant.  
A la mer vient, si est passé,  
En Toteneis est arrivez ;  
Plusurs réus ot en la tere,  
Entr'eus eurent estrif è guere,  
Vers Exectre en cel pais."

Toteneis is Totnes in Devonshire.

Under the knight Milun, f. 166 :

"Milun fu de Suthwales nez."

He is celebrated for his exploits in Ireland, Norway, Gothland, Lotharingia, Albany, &c.

Under Launval, f. 154, b :

"En Bretun l'apelent Lanval."

Under Guigemar, f. 141 :

"La caumbre ert peinte tut entur ;  
Venus le dieusse d'amur,  
Fu tres bien mis en la peinture,  
Les traiz mustrez è la nature,  
Cumens hum deit amur tenir,  
E léalment è bien servir.  
Le livre Ovide ù il enseigne," &c.

At the end of Eliduc's tale we have these lines, f. 181 :

"Del aventure de ces treis,  
Li auncien Bretun curteis  
Firent le *lai* pour remembrer  
Que hum nel deust pas oublier."—[*Equitan?*]

And under the tale of Fresne, f. 148 :

"Li Bretun en firent un *lai*."

At the conclusion of most of the tales it is said that these *Lais* were made by the poets of Bretaigne. Another of the tales is thus closed, f. 146 :

"De cest conte k'oï avez  
Fu Gugemer le *lai* trovez  
Qui hum dist en harpe è en rote  
Bone en est a oïr la note."

<sup>1</sup> MSS. Harl. 978, 107.

of her tales are borrowed from the old British *lais*. The scenes of several of these stories are laid in *Bretagne*, which appears sometimes to mean Brittany in France, and sometimes Great Britain.] Brittany was, as it were, newly peopled in the fourth century by a colony or army of the Welsh, who migrated thither under the conduct of Maximus, a Roman general in Britain,<sup>1</sup> and Conau Lord of Meiriadoc or Denbighland.<sup>2</sup> The Armorican language now spoken in Brittany is a dialect of the Welsh: and so strong a resemblance still subsists between the two languages, that in our conquest of Belleisle (1756), such of our soldiers as were natives of Wales were understood by the peasantry.<sup>3</sup> Milton, whose imagination was much struck with the old British story, more than once alludes to the Welsh colony planted in Armorica by Maximus, and the Prince of Meiriadoc:

Et tandem Armoricos Britonum sub lege colonos.<sup>4</sup>

And in the *Paradise Lost* he mentions indiscriminately the knights of Wales and Armorica as the customary retinue of King Arthur.

What resounds  
In fable or romance, of Uther's son  
Begirt with British and Armorican knights.<sup>5</sup>

This migration of the Welsh into Brittany or Armorica which, during the distractions of the empire (in consequence of the numerous armies of barbarians with which Rome was surrounded on every side), had thrown off its dependence on the Romans, seems to have occasioned a close connexion between the two countries for many centuries.<sup>6</sup> Nor will it prove less necessary to our purpose to

<sup>1</sup> Maximus appears to have set up a separate interest in Britain, and to have engaged an army of the provincial Britons on his side against the Romans. Not succeeding in his designs, he was obliged to retire with his British troops to the continent, as in the text. He had a considerable interest in Wales, having married Ellena, daughter of Eudda, a powerful chieftain of North Wales. She was born at Caernarvon, where her chapel is still shown.—*Mon. Antiq.* p. 166, seq.

<sup>2</sup> See *Hist. de Bretagne*, par d'Argentre, p. 2. Powel's *Wales*, pp. 1, 2, seq. and p. 6, edit. 1584. Lbuidy's *Etymol.* p. 32, col. 3. And Galfrid. *Mon. Hist. Brit.* lib. v. c. 12, vii. 3, ix. 2. Compare Borlase, *Antiq. Cornwall*, b. i. ch. 10, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> [Mr. Ellis further observes that the Sclavonian sailors employed on board of Venetian ships in the Russian trade never fail to recognise a kindred dialect on their arrival at St. Petersburg.—*Historical Sketch of the Rise and Progress of the English Poetry and Language*, i. 8.—*Par.*]

<sup>4</sup> Mansus.

<sup>5</sup> *Parad. L.* i. 579. Compare Pelloutier, *Mem. sur la Langue Celt.* tom. i. 19.

<sup>6</sup> This secession of the Welsh at so critical a period, was extremely natural, into a neighbouring maritime country with which they had constantly trafficked, and which, like themselves, had disclaimed the Roman yoke.

[That the British soldiers, enrolled by Maximus, wandered into Armorica after his death, and new-named it, seems to be unfounded. I cannot avoid agreeing with Du Bos, that “quant aux tems où la peuplade des Britons insulaires s'est établie dans les Gaules,” it was not before the year 513. *Hist. Crit.* ii. 470.—*Turner.*]

It is not related in any Greek or Roman historian. But their silence is by no means a sufficient warrant for us to reject the numerous testimonies of the old

observe that the Cornish Britons, whose language was another dialect of the ancient British, from the fourth or fifth century downwards, maintained a no less intimate correspondence with the natives of Armorica; intermarrying with them, and perpetually resorting thither for the education of their children, for advice, for procuring troops against the Saxons, for the purposes of traffic, and various other occasions. This connexion was so strongly kept up, that an ingenious French antiquary supposes that the communications of the Armoricans with the Cornish had chiefly contributed to give a roughness or rather hardness to the romance or French language in some of the provinces, towards the eleventh century, which was not before discernible.<sup>1</sup> And this intercourse will appear more natural if we consider that not only Armorica,<sup>2</sup> a maritime province of Gaul never much frequented by the Romans, and now totally deserted by them, was still in some measure a Celtic nation; but that also the inhabitants of Cornwall, together with those of Devonshire and of the adjoining parts of Somersetshire, intermixing in a very slight degree with the Romans, and having suffered fewer important alterations in their original constitution and customs from the imperial laws and police than any other province of this island, long preserved their genuine manners and British character; and forming a sort of separate principality under the government of a succession of powerful chieftains, usually denominated princes or dukes of Cornwall, remained partly in a state of independence during the Saxon heptarchy, and were not entirely reduced till the Norman conquest. Cornwall, in particular, retained its old Celtic dialect till the reign of Elizabeth.<sup>3</sup>

And here I digress a moment to remark that, in the circumstance

---

British writers concerning this event. It is mentioned, in particular, by Llywarc Hen, a famous bard who lived only one hundred and fifty years afterwards. Many of his poems are still extant, in which he celebrates his twenty-four sons who wore gold chains, and were all killed in battles against the Saxons.

[Eight of the elegies of Llywarc-Hen, or Llywarc the Aged, were selected and translated by Richard Thomas, A. B., of Jesus College, Oxford; but, these translations being more distinguished by their elegance than fidelity, the learned Mr. Owen produced a literal version of the Heroic Elegies and other pieces of this prince of the Cambrian Britons, which was published with the original text in 1792. It comprises the poem mentioned by Mr. Warton, which is marked by many poetic and pathetic passages. Llywarc flourished from about A. D. 520 to 630, at the period of Arthur and Cadwallon. See Owen's *Cambrian Biography*.—*Park.*]

<sup>1</sup> M. Abbé Lebeuf, *Recherches, &c.* *Mem. de Litt.* tom. xvii. p. 718, edit. 40. “Je pense que cela durait jusqu'à ce que le commerce de ces provinces avec les peuples du Nord et de l'Allemagne, et sur tout celui des habitans de l'Armorique, avec l'Anglois, vers l'onzième siècle,” &c.

<sup>2</sup> [Armorica was the north-west corner of Gaul, included between the Loire, the Seine, and the Atlantic.—*Park.*]

<sup>3</sup> See *Camd. Brit.* i. 44, edit. 1723. Lhuyd's *Arch.* p. 253. [It did not entirely cease to be spoken till of late years, as may be gathered from an account of the death of an old Cornish woman in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1785.—*Park.* This was written in 1824, and now (1870) there still remain people who understand and speak the old Cornish.]

just mentioned about Wales, of its connexion with Armorica, we perceive the solution of a difficulty which at first sight appears extremely problematical—I mean, not only that Wales should have been so constantly made the theatre of the old British chivalry, but that so many of the favourite fictions which occur in the early French romances should also be literally found in the tales and chronicles of the elder Welsh bards.<sup>1</sup> It was owing to the perpetual communication kept up between the Welsh and the people of Armorica, who abounded in these fictions, and who naturally took occasion to interweave them into the history of their friends and allies. Nor are we now at a loss to give the reason why Cornwall, in the same French romances, is made the scene and the subject of so many romantic adventures.<sup>2</sup> In the mean time we may observe, what indeed has been already implied, that a strict intercourse was upheld between Cornwall and Wales. Their languages, customs, and alliances, as I have hinted, were the same, and they were separated only by a strait of inconsiderable breadth. Cornwall is frequently styled West-Wales by the British writers. At the invasion of the Saxons both countries became indiscriminately the receptacle of the fugitive Britons.<sup>3</sup> We find the Welsh and Cornish, as one people, often uniting themselves as in a national cause against the Saxons. They were frequently subject to the same prince,<sup>4</sup> who sometimes resided in Wales and sometimes in Cornwall; and the kings or dukes of Cornwall were perpetually sung by the Welsh bards. Llygad Gwr, a Welsh bard, in his sublime and spirited ode to Llwellyn, son of Grunfludd, the last prince of Wales of the British line, has a wish, “May the prints of the hoofs of my prince’s steed be seen as far as Cornwall.”<sup>5</sup> Traditions about King Arthur, to mention no more instances, are as popular in Cornwall as in Wales; and most of the romantic castles, rocks, rivers,

<sup>1</sup> The story of *le court Mantel*, or the *Boy and the Mantle*, told by an old French troubadour cited by M. de Sainte Palaye, is recorded in many manuscript Welsh chronicles, as I learn from original letters of Lhuyd in the Ashmolean Museum. See *Mem. Anc. Chev.* i. 119, and *Obs. Spenser*, i § ii. pp. 54, 55. And from the same authority I am informed that the fiction of the giant’s coat composed of the beards of the kings whom he had conquered is related in the legends of the bards of both countries. See *Obs. Spens.* ut supr. p. 24, seq. But instances are innumerable.

<sup>2</sup> Hence, in the Armorican tales just quoted, mention is made of Totnes and Exeter, anciently included in Cornwall.

<sup>3</sup> [The chronicle of the Abbey of Mont St. Michael gives the year 513 as the period of the flight into Bretagne: “Anno 513, venerunt transmarini Britanni in Armoricam, id est minorem Britanniam.” The ancient Saxon poet (apud Duchesne *Hist. Franc.* Script. 2, p. 148) also peoples Bretagne after the Saxon conquest.—Turner.]

<sup>4</sup> Who was sometimes chosen from Wales and Cornwall, and sometimes from Armorica. Borlase, *ubi supr.* p. 403. See also pp. 375, 377, 393. And Concil. Speleian, tom. i. 9, 112, edit. 1639, fol. Stillingfleet’s *Orig. Brit.* ch. 5, p. 344, seq. edit. 1688, fol. From Cornuwallia, used by the Latin monkish historians, came the present name Cornwall. Borlase, *ibid.* p. 325.

<sup>5</sup> Evans, p. 43.

and caves, of both nations, are alike at this day distinguished by some noble achievement, at least by the name, of that celebrated champion. But to return.

About the year 1100, [Walter Calenius,] archdeacon of Oxford, a learned man, and a diligent collector of histories, travelling through France, procured in Armorica an ancient chronicle written in the British or Armorican language, entitled, *Brut-y-Brenhined*, or *The History of the Kings of Britain*.<sup>1</sup> This book he brought into England, and communicated it to Geoffrey of Monmouth, a Welsh Benedictine monk, an elegant writer of Latin, and admirably skilled in the British tongue. Geoffrey, at the request and recommendation of Gualter the archdeacon, translated this British chronicle into Latin,<sup>2</sup> executing the translation with a tolerable degree of purity and great fidelity, yet<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the curious library of the family of Davies at Llanerk, in Denbighshire, there [was] a copy of this chronicle in the handwriting of Guttyn Owen, a celebrated Welsh bard and antiquarian about the year 1470, who ascribes it to Tyffilio, a bishop, and the son of Brockmael-Yscythroc, Prince of Powis. Tyffilio indeed wrote a *History of Britain*; but that work, as we are assured by Lhuyd in the *Archæologia*, was entirely ecclesiastical, and has been long since lost.

[The *Brut* of Tyffilio was published in the second volume of the *Welsh Archæology*. A translation by the Rev. P. Roberts has since appeared under the title of *A Chronicle of the British Kings*. The first book of Guttyn Owain's copy, being much more ample in its details than the other MSS., was incorporated by Mr. Roberts in his volume. The remaining books appear to contain no material variations.—*Price*. Sir F. Madden is of opinion, that the Welsh poems are copies of the Latin of Geoffrey of Monmouth. "In which I agree: at least that that was the origin of them in this island, and I have little doubt Geoffrey's stories came from Britany, but that they were worked up by him into his book, and not translated."—*Wright*.]

<sup>2</sup> See Galfr. Mon. l. i. c. l. xii. 1, 20, ix. 2, Bale, ii. 65. Thompson's Pref. to Geoffrey's *Hist. Transl.* edit. Lond. 1718, p. xxx. xvi.

<sup>3</sup> Geoffrey confesses, that he took some part of his account of King Arthur's achievements from the mouth of his friend Gualter, the archdeacon; who probably related to the translator some of the traditions on this subject which he had heard in Armorica, or which at that time might have been popular in Wales. *Hist. Brit.* Galfr. Mon. lib. xi. c. i. He also owns that Merlin's prophecies were not in the Armorican original. *Ib.* vii. 2. Compare Thompson's Pref. *ut supr.* pp. xxv. xxvii. The speeches and letters were forged by Geoffrey; and in the description of battles, our translator has not scrupled [to introduce] frequent variations and additions.

I am obliged to an ingenious antiquarian in British literature, Mr. Morris of Penbryn, for the following curious remarks concerning Geoffrey's original and his translation. "Geoffrey's *Sylvius*, in the British original, is *Silius*, which in Latin would make *Julius*. This illustrates and confirms Lambarde's *Brutus Julius. Peramb. Kent*, p. 12. See also in the British bards. And hence Milton's objection is removed. *Hist. Engl.* p. 12. There are no *Flamines* or *Archflamines* in the British book. See Usher's *Primord.* p. 57, Dubl. edit. There are very few speeches in the original, and those very short. Geoffrey's *Fulgenius* is in the British copy *Sulien*, which by an alogy in Latin would be *Julianus*. See Milton's *Hist. Eng.* p. 100. There is no *Leil* in the British; that king's name was *Leon*. Geoffrey's *Caerlile* is in the British *Caerleon*[-upon-*Usk*, or *Isca Silurum*.] In the British, *Llaw ap Cynfarch*, should have been translated *Leo*, which is now rendered *Loth*. This has brought much confusion into the old Scotch history. I find no *Belinus* in the British copy; the name is *Beli*, which should have been in Latin *Belius*, or *Belgius*. Geoffrey's *Brennus* in the original is *Bran*, a common name among the Britons; as *Bran ap Dyfnwal*, &c. See Suidas's *Bphn*. It appears by the original, that the British name of *Carausius* was *Carawn*; hence *Tregaraun*, *i. e.* *Tregaron*, and the River *Caraun*, which gives name to *Abercorn*. In the British there is no division into

not without some interpolations. It was probably finished after the year [1128.]<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult to ascertain exactly the period at which our translator's original romance may probably be supposed to have been compiled. Yet this is a curious speculation, and will illustrate our argument. I am inclined to think that the work consists of fables thrown out by different rhapsodists at different times, which afterwards were collected and digested into an entire history, and perhaps with new decorations of fancy added by the compiler, who most probably was one of the professed bards, or rather a poetical historian, of Armorica or Basse-Bretagne. In this state, and under this form, I suppose it to have fallen into the hands of Geoffrey of Monmouth. If the hypothesis hereafter advanced concerning the particular species of fiction on which

books and chapters, a mark of antiquity. Those whom the translator calls Consuls of Rome, when Brennus took it, are in the original Twyfogion, *i. e.* princes or generals. The Gwalenses, Gwalo, or Gwalas, are added by Geoffrey, B. xii. c. 19." To what is here observed about Silius, I will add, that Abbot Whethamsted, in his MS. *Granarium*, mentions Siloius the father of Brutus. "Quomodo Brutus Siloii filius ad litora Angliae venit," &c. *Granar.* Part i. Lit. A. MSS. Cotton. Nero, C. vi. Brit. Mus. This gentleman had in his possession a very ancient manuscript of the original, and was many years preparing materials for giving an accurate and faithful translation of it into English. The manuscript in Jesus College Library at Oxford, which Wynne pretends to be the same which Geoffrey himself made use of, is evidently not older than the sixteenth century. Mr. Price, the Bodleian librarian, to whose friendship this work is much indebted, has two copies lately given him by Mr. Banks, much more ancient and perfect. But there is reason to suspect that most of the British manuscripts of this history are translations from Geoffrey's Latin: for Britannia they have Bryttaen, which in the original would have been Prydain. Geoffrey's translation, and for obvious reasons, is a very common manuscript. Compare Lhuyd's *Arch.* p. 265.

<sup>1</sup> [See Turner's *History of England*, i. p. 457.—Price.]

Thompson says, 1128, *ubi supr.* p. xxx. [In reference to the date at which Geoffrey of Monmouth's History was compiled, see Sir F. Madden's remarks in his paper on the *Historia Britonum* (Archæol. Journal, 1858, pp. 304-9).] Geoffrey's age is ascertained beyond a doubt, even if other proofs were wanting, from the contemporaries whom he mentions. Such as Robert Earl of Gloucester, natural son of Henry the First and Alexander Bishop of Lincoln, his patrons: he mentions also William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon. Wharton places Geoffrey's death in the year 1154. *Episc. Assav.* p. 306. Robert de Monte, who continued Sigeberth's chronicle down to the year 1183, in the preface to that work expressly says, that he took some of the materials of his supplement from the *Historia Britonum*, lately translated out of British into Latin. This was manifestly Geoffrey's book. Alfred of Beverley, who evidently wrote his *Annales*, published by Hearne [in the year 1129,] borrowed his account of the British kings from Geoffrey's *Historia*, whose words he sometimes literally transcribes. For instance, Alfred, in speaking of Arthur's keeping Whitsuntide at Caerleon, says, that the *Historia Britonum* enumerated all the kings who came thither on Arthur's invitation: and then adds, "Præter hos non remanunt princeps aliquius pretii citra Hispaniam qui ad istud edictum non venerit." Alured. *Bev. Annal.* p. 63, edit. Hearne. These are Geoffrey's own words; and so much his own, that they are one of his additions to the British original. But the curious reader, who desires a complete and critical discussion of this point, may consult an original letter of Bishop Lloyd, preserved among Tanner's manuscripts at Oxford, num. 94.

[This letter was printed in Gutech's *Collectanea Curiosa*, and in Owen's *British Remains*, and affords little information worthy of notice.—Douce.]

this narrative is founded, should be granted, it cannot, from what I have already proved, be more ancient than the eighth century: and we may reasonably conclude that it was composed much later, as some considerable length of time must have been necessary for the propagation and establishment of that species of fiction. The simple subject of this chronicle, divested of its romantic embellishments, is a deduction of the Welsh princes from the Trojan Brutus to Cadwallader, who reigned in the seventh century.<sup>1</sup> It must be acknowledged that many European nations were anciently fond of tracing their descent from Troy. Hannibalus Francus, in his Latin history of France written in the sixth century, beginning with the Trojan war and ending with Clovis I., ascribes the origin of the French nation to Francio a son of Priam.<sup>2</sup> So universal was this humour, and carried to such an absurd excess of extravagance, that under the reign of Justinian even the Greeks were ambitious of being thought to be descended from the Trojans, their ancient and notorious enemies. Unless we adopt the idea of those antiquaries who contend that Europe was peopled from Phrygia, it will be hard to discover at what period, or from what source, so strange and improbable a notion could take its rise, especially among nations unacquainted with history and overwhelmed by ignorance. The most rational mode of accounting for it is to suppose that the revival about the sixth or seventh century of Virgil's *Eneid*, which represented the Trojans as the founders of Rome, the capital of the supreme pontiff, and a city on various other accounts in the early ages of Christianity highly reverenced and distinguished, occasioned an emulation in many other European nations of claiming an alliance to the same respectable original. The monks and other ecclesiastics, the only readers and writers of the age, were likely to broach, and were interested in propagating, such an opinion. As the more barbarous countries of Europe began to be tinctured with literature, there was hardly one of them but fell into the fashion of deducing its original from some of the nations most celebrated in the ancient books. Those who did not aspire so high as King Priam, or who found that claim pre-occupied, boasted to be descended from some of the generals of Alexander the Great, from Prusias king of Bithynia, from the Greeks or the Egyptians. It is not in the meantime quite improbable that, as most of the European nations were provincial to the Romans, those who fancied themselves to be of Trojan ex-

<sup>1</sup> This notion of their extraction from the Trojans had so infatuated the Welsh, that even so late as the year 1284, Archbishop Peckham, in his injunctions to the diocese of St. Asaph, orders the people to abstain from giving credit to idle dreams and visions, a superstition which they had contracted from their belief in the dream of their founder Brutus, in the temple of Diana, concerning his arrival in Britain. The archbishop very seriously advises them to boast no more of their relation to the conquered and fugitive Trojans, but to glory in the victorious crois of Christ. Wilkins' *Concil.* tom. ii. p. 106, edit. 1737, fol.

<sup>2</sup> It is among the *Scriptores Rer. German.* Sim. Schard. tom. i. p. 301, edit. Basil. 1574. It consists of eighteen books.

traction might have imbibed this notion, or at least have acquired a general knowledge of the Trojan story from their conquerors: more especially the Britons, who continued so long under the yoke of Rome.<sup>1</sup> But as to the story of Brutus in particular, Geoffrey's hero, it may be presumed that his legend was not contrived, nor the history of his successors invented, till after the ninth century: for Nennius, who lived about the middle of that century, not only speaks of Brutus with great obscurity and inconsistency, but seems totally uninformed as to every circumstance of the British affairs which preceded Cæsar's invasion. There are other proofs that this piece could not have existed before the ninth century. Alfred's Saxon translation of the Mercian law is mentioned.<sup>2</sup> Charlemagne's Twelve Peers, by an anachronism not uncommon in romance, are said to be present at King Arthur's magnificent coronation in the city of Caerleon.<sup>3</sup> It were easy to produce instances that this chronicle was undoubtedly framed after the legend of Saint Ursula, the acts of Saint Lucius and the historical writings of the venerable Bede had undergone some degree of circulation in the world. At the same time it contains many passages which incline us to determine that some parts of it at least were written after or about the eleventh century. I will not insist on that passage in which the title of legate of the apostolic see is attributed to Dubricius in the character of primate of Britain; as it appears for obvious reasons to have been an artful interpolation of the translator, who was an ecclesiastic. But I will select other arguments. Canute's forest, or Cannock-wood, in Staffordshire occurs; and Canute died in the year 1036.<sup>4</sup> At the ideal coronation of King Arthur, just mentioned, a tournament is described as exhibited in its highest splendour. "Many knights," says our Armorican fabler, "famous for feats of chivalry, were present, with apparel and arms of the same colour and fashion. They formed a species of diversion, in imitation of a fight on horseback, and the ladies being placed on the walls of the castles, darted amorous glances on the combatants. None of these ladies esteemed any knight worthy of her love, but such as had given proof of his gallantry in three several encounters. Thus the valour of the men encouraged chastity in the women, and the attention of the women proved an incentive to the soldier's bravery."<sup>5</sup> Here is the practice of chivalry under the combined ideas of love and military prowess, as they seem to have subsisted after the feudal constitution had acquired greater degrees not only of stability but of splendour and refinement;<sup>6</sup> and although a species of tournament was exhibited in France at the reconciliation of the sons of Louis the Feeble, in

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, sect. iii.

<sup>2</sup> L. iii. c. 13.

<sup>3</sup> L. ix. c. 12.

<sup>4</sup> L. vii. c. 4.

<sup>5</sup> L. ix. c. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Pitts mentions an anonymous writer under the name of Eremita Britannus, who studied history and astronomy, and flourished about the year 720. He wrote, besides, a book in an unknown language, entitled, *Sanctum Graal, De Rege Arthurio et rebus gestis ejus*. Lib. i. *De Mensa rotunda et Strenuis Equitibus*. Lib. i. See Pitts, p. 122. Bale, x. 21. Usser. *Primord.* p. 17.

the close of the ninth century, and at the beginning of the tenth the coronation of the Emperor Henry was solemnized with martial entertainments, in which many parties were introduced fighting on horseback ; yet it was long afterwards that these games were accompanied with the peculiar formalities and ceremonious usages here described.<sup>1</sup> In the meantime, we cannot answer for the innovations of a translator in such a description. It was not till those memorable campaigns of mistaken devotion had infatuated the western world, that the soldans or sultans of Babylon [Cairo], of Egypt, of Iconium, and other eastern kingdoms became familiar in Europe. Not that the notion of this piece being written so late as the crusades in the least invalidates the doctrine delivered in this discourse. Not even if we suppose that Geoffrey of Monmouth was its original composer. That notion rather tends to confirm and establish my system. On the whole we may venture to affirm that this chronicle, supposed to contain the ideas of the Welsh bards, entirely consists of Arabian inventions ; and in this view, no difference is made whether it was compiled about the tenth century, at which time, if not before, the Arabians from their settlement in Spain must have communicated their romantic fables to other parts of Europe, especially to the French ; or whether it first appeared in the eleventh century, after the crusades had multiplied these fables to an excessive degree, and made them universally popular. And although the general cast of the inventions contained in this romance is alone sufficient to point out the source from whence they were derived, yet I choose to prove to a demonstration what is here advanced, by producing and examining some particular passages.

The books of the Arabians and Persians abound with extravagant traditions about the giants Gog and Magog. These they call Jagiouge and Magiouge ; and the Caucasian wall, said to be built by Alexander the Great from the Caspian to the Black Sea, in order to cover the frontiers of his dominion, and to prevent the incursions of the Scythians,<sup>2</sup> is called by the orientals the Wall of Gog and Magog.<sup>3</sup> One of the most formidable giants, according to our

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, sects. iii. and xii. I will here produce, from that learned orientalist M. D'Herbelot, some curious traits of Arabian knight-errantry, which the reader may apply to the principles of this Dissertation as he pleases. "BATHALL.—Une homme hardi et vaillant, qui cherché des avantures tels qu'étoient les *chevaliers errans* de nos anciens Romans." He adds, that Bathall, an Arabian, who lived about the year of Christ 740, was a warrior of this class, concerning whom many marvellous feats of arms are reported : that his life was written in a large volume, "mais qu'elle est toute remplie d'*exaggerations et de menteries*." Bibl. Oriental. p. 193, a. b. In the royal library at Paris there is an Arabian book entitled, *Scrat al Mogiak-edir*, i. e. *The Lives of the most valiant Champions*, Num. 1079.

<sup>2</sup> Compare M. Petit de la Croix, *Hist. Genghiz Chan*, l. iv. c. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Herbelot. Bibl. Oriental, pp. 157, 291, 318, 438, 470, 528, 795, 796, 811, &c. They call Tartary the land of Jagiouge and Magiouge. This wall, some few fragments of which still remain, they pretend to have been built with all sorts of metals. See Abulfaraj *Hist. Dynast.* edit. Pococke, p. 62, A.D. 1673. It was an old tradition among the Tartars, that the people of Jagiouge and Magiouge were

Armorican romance, which opposed the landing of Brutus in Britain, was Goemagot. He was twelve cubits high, and would unroot an oak as easily as an hazel wand : but after a most obstinate encounter with Corineus, he was tumbled into the sea from the summit of a steep cliff on the rocky shores of Cornwall, and dashed in pieces against the huge crags of the declivity. The place where he fell, adds our historian, taking its name from the giant's fall, is called

perpetually endeavouring to make a passage through this fortress ; but that they would not succeed in their attempt till the Day of Judgment. See *Hist. Geneal. des Tartars*, d'Abulgazi Bahadur Khân, p. 43. About the year 808, the caliph Al Amin having heard wonderful reports concerning this wall or barrier, sent his interpreter Salam with a guard of fifty men to view it. After a dangerous journey of near two months, Salam and his party arrived in a desolated country, where they beheld the ruins of many cities destroyed by the people of Jagiouge and Magiouge. In six days more they reached the castles near the mountain Kokaiya or Caucalus. This mountain is inaccessible steep, perpetually covered with snows and thick clouds, and encompasses the country of Jagiouge and Magiouge, which is full of cultivated fields and cities. At an opening of this mountain the fortress appears : and travelling forwards, at the distance of two stages, they found another mountain, with a ditch cut through it one hundred and fifty cubits wide ; and within the aperture an iron gate fifty cubits high, supported by vast buttresses, having an iron bulwark crowned with iron turrets, reaching to the summit of the mountain itself, which is too high to be seen. The valves, lintels, threshold, bolts, lock and key, are all represented of proportionable magnitude. The governor of the castle above mentioned, once in every week mounted on horseback with ten others on horseback, comes to this gate, and striking it three times with a hammer weighing five pounds, and then listening, hears a murmuring noise from within. This noise is supposed to proceed from the Jagiouge and Magiouge confined there. Salam was told that they often appeared on the battlements of the bulwark. He returned after passing twenty-eight months in this extraordinary expedition. See *Mod. Univ. Hist.* vol. iv. B. i. sect. 2, pp. 15, 16, 17. And *Anc. vol. xx. p. 23.* [It is by no means improbable that the mention of Gog and Magog in the Apocaypse gave rise to their general notoriety both in the east and west. This prophecy must have been applied to the Huns under Attila at a very early period ; for in the Anonymous Chronicle of Hungary, published by Schwandtner (*Scriptor. Rer. Hungar.* tom. i.) we find it making a part of the national history. Attila is there said to be a descendant of Magog, the son of Japhet (*Genefis.* chap. x. verfe 2), from whom the Hungarians are also called Moger. This is evidently not the production of the writer's own imagination, but the simple record of a tradition, which had obtained a currency among his countrymen, and which, combined with the subsequent history of Almus and Arpad, wears the appearance of being extracted from some poetic narrative of the events.—Price.] Pliny, speaking of the Portæ Caucasicæ, mentions, “ *ingens naturæ opus, montibus interruptis repente, ubi fores obditæ ferratis trabibus,* ” &c. *Nat. Hist.* lib. vi. c. 2. Czar Peter the First, in his expedition into Persia, had the curiosity to survey the ruins of this wall : and some leagues within the mountain he found a skirt of it which seemed entire, and was about fifteen feet high. In some other parts it is still six or seven feet in height. It seems at first sight to be built of stone : but it consists of petrified earth, sand, and shells, which compose a substance of great solidity. It has been chiefly destroyed by the neighbouring inhabitants, for the sake of its materials : and most of the adjacent towns and villages are built out of its ruins. Bentinck's *Notes on Abulgazi*, p. 722, Engl. edit. See Chardin's *Travels*, p. 176. And Struys's *Voyage*, B. iii. c. 20, p. 226. Olearius's *Travels of the Holstein Ambassador*. B. vii. p. 403. *Geograph. Nubiens.* vi. c. 9. And *AZ. Petropolit.* vol. i. p. 405. By the way, this work probably preceded the time of Alexander : it does not appear, from the course of his victories, that he ever came near the Caspian gates. The first and fabulous history of the eastern nations will perhaps be found to begin with the exploits of this Grecian hero.

Lam-Goemagot, or Goemagot's Leap, to this day.<sup>1</sup> A no less monstrous giant, whom King Arthur slew on Saint Michael's Mount in [Normandy], is said by this fabler to have come from Spain. Here the origin of these stories is evidently betrayed.<sup>2</sup> The Arabians or Saracens, as I have hinted above, had conquered Spain, and were settled there. Arthur having killed this redoubted giant, declares that he had combated with none of equal strength and prowess, since he overcame the mighty giant Ritho on the mountain Arabius, who had made himself a robe of the beards of the kings whom he had killed. This tale is in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. A magician brought from Spain is called to the assistance of Edwin, a prince of Northumberland,<sup>3</sup> educated under Solomon king of the Armoricans.<sup>4</sup> In the prophecy of Merlin, delivered to Vortigern after the battle of the dragons, forged perhaps by the translator Geoffrey, yet apparently in the spirit and manner of the rest, we have the Arabians named, and their situations in Spain and Africa. "From Conau shall come forth a wild boar, whose tusks shall destroy the oaks of the forests of France. The Arabians and Africans shall dread him; and he shall continue his rapid course into the most distant parts of Spain."<sup>5</sup> This is King Arthur. In the same prophecy, mention is made of the "Woods of Africa."<sup>6</sup> In another place Gormund king of the [Danes] occurs.<sup>6</sup> In a battle which Arthur fights against the Romans some of the principal leaders in the Roman army are Alifantinam, king of Spain, Pandrasus, king of Egypt, Boccus, king of the Medes, Evander, king of Syria, Micipia, king of Babylon, and a duke

<sup>1</sup> Lib. i. c. 16. [Mr. Roberts in his extreme zeal for stripping the British History of all its fictions, and every romantic allusion, conceives this name a fabrication from the mint of Geoffrey. The Welsh copies read Gogmagog; yet as Ponticus Virinius, who lived in the fifteenth century, reads Goermagog, Mr. Roberts has "little doubt but that the original was Cawr-Madog, i. e. the giant or great warrior." Beliagog is the name of a giant in *Sir Trifram*.—Price. Mr. Douce was the first to point out that there is a Mount St. Michael in Normandy, and Sir F. Madden, referring to *Histoire Pittoresque du Mont-Saint-Michel et de Tombelene. Par Maximilien Raoul*, 8vo. Par. 1833, and to *Le Livre des Légendes*, par le Roux de Lincy, Introduction, p. 104, 8vo. Par. 1836, entertains no doubt, that this Mount St. Michael in Normandy is the place intended.]

<sup>2</sup> L. x. c. 3. [It is very certain that the tales of Arthur and his Knights, which have appeared in so many forms, and under the various titles of the St. Graal, Tristan de Leonnois, Lancelot du Lac, &c., were not immediately borrowed from the work of Geoffrey of Monmouth, but from his Armoric originals. The St. Graal is a work of great antiquity, probably of the eighth century. There are Welsh MSS. of it still existing which, though not very old, were probably copied from earlier ones, and are, it is to be presumed, more genuine copies of the ancient romance than any other extant.—Douce. It is at present a generally received opinion that the Welsh versions of the old romances are later than the Latin, and were taken from the latter.]

<sup>3</sup> The Cumbrian and Northumbrian Britons, as powerful opponents of the Saxons, were strongly allied to the Welsh and Cornish.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. xii. c. 1, 4, 5, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Lib. vii. c. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Lib. xii. 2, xi. 8, 10. ["Gormund," says Mr. Ritson, "in authentic history was a king of the Danes who infested England in the ninth century, and was defeated and baptized by Alfred." *Dissertation on Romance, &c.* p. 23.—Park.]

of Phrygia.<sup>1</sup> It is obvious to suppose how these countries became so familiar to the bard of our chronicle. The old fictions about Stonehenge were derived from the same inexhaustible source of extravagant imagination. We are told in this romance, that the giants conveyed the stones which compose this miraculous monument from the farthest coasts of Africa. Every one of these stones is supposed to be mystical, and to contain a medicinal virtue: an idea drawn from the medical skill of the Arabians,<sup>2</sup> and more particularly from the Arabian doctrine of attributing healing qualities and other occult properties to stones.<sup>3</sup> Merlin's transformation of Uther into Gorlois, and of Ulfin into Bricel, by the power of some medical preparation is a species of Arabian magic, which professed to work the most wonderful deceptions of this kind, and is mentioned at large hereafter in tracing the inventions of Chaucer's poetry. The attribution of prophetic language to birds was common among the orientals: and an eagle is supposed to speak at building the walls of the city of Paladur, now Shaftesbury.<sup>4</sup> The Arabians cultivated the study of philosophy, particularly astronomy, with amazing ardour.<sup>5</sup> Hence arose the tradition reported by our historian, that in King Arthur's reign there subsisted at Caerleon in Glamorganshire a college of two hundred philosophers, who studied astronomy and other sciences; and who were particularly employed in watching the courses of the stars, and predicting events to the king from their observations.<sup>6</sup> Edwin's Spanish magician above mentioned, by his knowledge of the flight of birds and the courses of the stars, is said to foretel future disasters. In the same strain Merlin prognosticates Uther's success in battle by the appearance of a comet.<sup>7</sup> The same enchanter's wonderful skill in mechanical powers, by which he removes the giant's Dance, or Stonehenge, from Ireland into England, and the notion that this stupendous structure was raised by a profound philosophical knowledge of the mechanical arts, are founded on the Arabic literature.<sup>8</sup> To which we may add King Bladud's magical operations.<sup>9</sup> Dragons are a sure mark of orientalism.<sup>10</sup> One of these

<sup>1</sup> Lib. x. c. 5, 8, 10.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra*.

<sup>3</sup> This chronicle was evidently compiled to do honour to the Britons and their affairs, and especially in opposition to the Saxons. Now the importance with which these romancers seem to speak of Stonehenge, and the many beautiful fictions with which they have been so studious to embellish its origin, and to aggrandize its history, appear to me strongly to favour the hypothesis, that Stonehenge is a British monument; and indeed to prove, that it was really erected in memory of the three hundred British nobles massacred by the Saxon Hengist. See sect. ii. *infra*. No Druidical monument, of which so many remains were common, engaged their attention or interested them so much as this national memorial appears to have done.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. ii. c. 9.

<sup>5</sup> See *Diss.* ii.

<sup>6</sup> Lib. viii. c. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Lib. ix. c. 12.

<sup>8</sup> Lib. viii. c. 10. See vol. ii. sect. xv. *paffim*.

<sup>9</sup> Lib. ii. c. 10.

<sup>10</sup> [The stability of Mr. Warton's assertion has been shaken by Sir Walter Scott, who states that the idea of this fabulous animal was familiar to the Celtic tribes at an early period, and was borne on the banner of Pendragon, who from that circumstance derived his name. A dragon was also the standard of the renowned Arthur. A description of this banner, the magical work of Merlin, occurs in the romance

in our romance is a “terrible dragon flying from the west, breathing fire, and illuminating all the country with the brightness of his eyes.”<sup>1</sup> In another place we have a giant mounted on a winged dragon: the dragon erects his scaly tail, and wafts his rider to the clouds with great rapidity.<sup>2</sup>

Arthur and Charlemagne are the first and original heroes of romance; and as Geoffrey’s history is the grand repository of the acts of Arthur, so a fabulous history ascribed to Turpin is the groundwork of all the chimerical legends which have been related concerning the conquests of Charlemagne and his twelve peers.<sup>3</sup> Its subject is the expulsion of the Saracens from Spain: and it is filled with fictions evidently congenial with those which characterise Geoffrey’s history.<sup>4</sup>

Some suppose, as I have hinted above, this romance to have been written by Turpin, a monk of the eighth century who, for his knowledge of the Latin language, his sanctity, and gallant exploits against the Spanish Saracens, was preferred to the archbishopric of Rheims by Charlemagne. Others believe it to have been forged

---

of *Arthur and Merlin* in the Auchinleck MS. [printed for the Abbotsford Club, 1838]:

“ Merlin bar her gonfanoun;  
Upon the top stode a *dragoun*,  
Swithe griseliche a litel croune,  
Fas him biheld al tho in the toun,  
For the mouth he had grinninge  
And the tong out flatlinge  
That our keft sparkes of fer,  
Into the skies that floweren cler;” &c.



In the Welsh triads (adds the same authority) I find the dragon repeatedly mentioned: and in a battle fought at Bedford, about 752, betwixt Ethelbald, king of Mercia, and Cuthred, king of Wessex, a golden dragon, the banner of the latter, was borne in the front of the combat by Edelheim or Edelhun, a chief of the West Saxons. Notes on *Sir Tristram*, p. 290.—Park.]

[Among the Celtic tribes, as among the Finns and Sclavonians, the serpent appears to have been held in sacred estimation; and the early traditions of the North abound in fables relative to dragons who lay slumbering upon the golden “hoard” by day, and wandered through the air by night. But as the heroes of Northern adventure are usually engaged in extirpating this imaginary race, it is not improbable that some of these narratives may have been founded on the conflicts between the Finnish and Scandinavian priesthoods.—Price.]

<sup>1</sup> Lib. x. c. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. vii. c. 4.

<sup>3</sup> [“But this,” says Ritson, “requires it to have been written before the year 1066, when the adventures and exploits of Charlemagne, Rowland and Oliver, were chanted at the battle of Hastings; whereas there is strong internal proof that this romance was written long after the time of Charlemagne.” *Dissert. on Rom. and Minst.* p. 47.—Park.]

<sup>4</sup> I will mention only one among many others. The christians under Charlemagne are said to have found in Spain a golden idol, or image of Mahomet, as high as a bird can fly. It was framed of the purest metal by Mahomet himself, who by his knowledge in necromancy had sealed up within it a legion of diabolical spirits. It held in its hand a prodigious club; and the Saracens had a prophetic tradition, that this club should fall from the hand of the image in that year when a certain king should be born in France, &c. J. Turpini *Hist. de Vit. Carol. Magni. et Rolandi*, cap. iv. f. 2, a.

under Archbishop Turpin's name<sup>1</sup> about that time. Others, very soon afterwards, in the reign of Charles the Bald.<sup>2</sup> That is, about the year 870.<sup>3</sup>

Voltaire, a writer of much deeper research than is imagined, and the first who has displayed the literature and customs of the dark ages with any degree of penetration and comprehension, speaking of the fictitious tales concerning Charlemagne, has remarked, "Ces fables qu'un moine ecrivit au onzième siècle, sous le nom de l'archeveque Turpin."<sup>4</sup> And it might easily be shewn that, just before the commencement of the thirteenth century, romantic stories about Charlemagne were more fashionable than ever among the French minstrels. That is, on the recent publication of this fabulous history of Charlemagne. Historical evidence concurs with numerous internal arguments to prove, that it must have been compiled after the crusades. In the twentieth chapter, a pretended pilgrimage of Charlemagne to the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem is recorded: a forgery seemingly contrived with a design to give an importance to those wild expeditions, and which would easily be believed when thus authenticated by an archbishop.<sup>5</sup>

There is another strong internal proof that this romance was written long after the time of Charlemagne. Our historian is speaking of the numerous chiefs and kings who came with their armies to assist his hero: among the rest he mentions Earl Oell, and adds, "Of this man there is a song commonly sung among the minstrels even to this day."<sup>6</sup> Nor will I believe, that the European art of war, in the eighth century, could bring into the field such a prodigious parade of battering rams and wooden castles, as those with which Charlemagne is said to have besieged the city Agennum:<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [“Whose true name,” says Ritson, “was Tilpin, and who died before Charlemagne; though Robert Gaguin, in his licentious translation of the work, 1527, makes him relate his own death. Another pretended version of this *Pseudo-Turpin*, said to have been made by one Mickius or Michael le Harnes, who lived in 1206, has little or nothing in common with its false original.” *Diss. on Rom. and Minst.* p. 46.—Park.]

<sup>2</sup> See *Hist. Acad. des Inscript. &c.* vii. 293, edit. 4to.

<sup>3</sup> See Catel, *Mem. de l' Hist. du Languedoc*, p. 545.

<sup>4</sup> *Hist. Gen.* ch. viii. *Oeuvr.* tom. i. p. 84, edit. Genev. 1756.

<sup>5</sup> See *infr.*

<sup>6</sup> *De hoc canitur in Cantilena usque ad hodiernum diem*, cap. xi. f. 4, b, edit. Francof. 1566. *Chronograph. Quat.*

[In the best MSS. of Turpin, the above passage refers to Oger, king of Denmark, whose name is omitted in that followed by the editor of Turpin's history here cited. There is no work that is known to relate to Oel. The romance of *Ogier Danois*, originally written in rhyme, is here probably referred to.—*Douce*. The language of Turpin seems rather to imply a ballad or song on the achievements of this hero, such as is still to be found in the Danish *Kjempes Viser*. The name, however written,—Oger, Ogier, Odiger, Holger,—clearly refers to Helgi, a hero of the Edda and the *Volsunga-Saga* [of the latter of which there is a recent (1870) translation by Mr. Morris,]. In the earlier traditions the theatre of his actions is confined to Denmark and the neighbouring countries; but the later fictions embellish his career with all the marvels of romance; and after leading him as a conqueror over the greater part of Europe and Asia, transport him to the isle of Avalon, where he still resides with Morgan la faye.—*Price*.]

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* cap. ix. f. 3, b. The writer adds, “Cæterisque artificiis ad capiendum,”

the crusades seem to have made these huge military machines common in the European armies. However, we may suspect it appeared before, yet not long before, Geoffrey's romance; who mentions Charlemagne's *Twelve Peers*, so lavishly celebrated in Turpin's book, as present at King Arthur's imaginary coronation at Caerleon. Although the twelve peers of France occur in chronicles of the tenth century;<sup>1</sup> and they might besides have been suggested to Geoffrey's original author from popular traditions and songs of minstrels. We are sure it was extant before the year 1122; for Calixtus the Second in that year, by papal authority, pronounced this history to be genuine.<sup>2</sup> Monsieur Allard affirms that it was written, and in the eleventh century, at Vienne by a monk of St. Andrew's.<sup>3</sup> This monk was probably nothing more than some Latin translator: but a learned French antiquary is of opinion that it was originally composed in Latin; and moreover, that the most ancient romances, even those of the Round Table, were originally written in that language. Oienhart, and with the greatest probability, supposes it to be the work of a Spaniard. He quotes an authentic manuscript to prove, that it was brought out of Spain into France before the close of the twelfth century;<sup>4</sup> and that the miraculous exploits performed in Spain by Charlemagne and Earl Roland, recorded in this romantic history, were unknown among the French before that period: except only that some few of them were obscurely and imperfectly sketched in the metrical tales of those who sang heroic adventures.<sup>5</sup> Oienhart's supposition that this

---

&c. See also cap. x. *ibid.* Compare sect. iv. *infra.* In one of Charlemagne's battles, the Saracens advance with horrible visors bearded and horned, and with drums or cymbals. "Tenentesque singuli *tympana*, quæ manibus fortiter percutebant." The unusual spectacle and sound terrified the horses of the Christian army, and threw them into confusion. In a second engagement, Charlemagne commanded the eyes of the horses to be covered, and their ears to be stopped. Turpin, cap. xviii. f. 7, b. The latter expedient is copied in the romance of *Richard Cœur de Lion*, written about the eleventh century. See sect. iv. *infra.* See also what is said of the Saracen drums, *ibid.*

<sup>1</sup> Flooard of Rheims first mentions them, whose chronicle comes down to 966.

<sup>2</sup> *Magn. Chron. Belgic.* pag. 150, sub. ann. Compare J. Long. *Bibl. Hist. Gall.* num. 6671. And *Lambec.* ii. p. 333.

<sup>3</sup> *Bibl. de Dauphiné*, p. 224.

<sup>4</sup> See *infra.* [It must be borne in mind, in regard to the language in which these romances are said to be first written, that the people to whom they belonged were not at all in the habit of writing their literature—they would have had to write it in runes;—it was preserved by memory. Hence any early written records of it would necessarily be written in Latin. However, it began to be written to any extent only in the ages of feudalism, when the language of all feudal people was the debased latin of that time—*lingua Romana*, as it was called, or *Roman* (French), so that we first find these romances written in this language. This is the reason why they were called *romans* (i.e. books written in French); and this is the origin of the word *Romance*.—Wright.]

<sup>5</sup> Arnoldi Oienharti *Notit. utriusque Vasconie*, edit. Paris, 1638, page 397, lib. iii. c. 3. Such was Roland's song, sung at the battle of Hastings. But see this romance, cap. xx. f. 8, b, where Turpin seems to refer to some other fabulous materials or history concerning Charlemagne. Particularly about Galafar and Braiamant, which make such a figure in Boiardo and Ariosto.

history was compiled in Spain, the centre of oriental fabling in Europe, at once accounts for the nature and extravagance of its fictions, and immediately points to their Arabian origin.<sup>1</sup> As to the French manuscript of this history, it is a translation from Turpin's Latin, made by Michael le Harnes in the year 1207.<sup>2</sup> And, by the way, from the translator's declaration, that there was a great impropriety in translating Latin prose into verse, we may conclude, that at the commencement of the thirteenth century the French generally made their translations into verse.

In these two fabulous chronicles the foundations of romance seem to be laid. The principal characters, the leading subjects, and the fundamental fictions, which have supplied such ample matter to this singular species of composition, are here first displayed. And although the long continuance of the crusades imported innumerable inventions of a similar complexion, and substituted the achievements of new champions and the wonders of other countries, yet the tales of Arthur and of Charlemagne, diversified indeed or enlarged with additional embellishments, still continued to prevail, and to be the favourite topics: and this, partly from their early popularity, partly from the quantity and the beauty of the fictions with which they were at first supported, and especially because the design of the cru-

<sup>1</sup> Innumerable romantic stories, of Arabian growth, are to this day current among the common people of Spain, which they call *Cuentos de Viejas*. I will relate one from that lively picture of the Spaniards, *Relation du Voyage d'Espagne*, by Madame Danois. Within the ancient castle of Toledo, they say, there was a vast cavern whose entrance was strongly barricadoed. It was universally believed, that if any person entered this cavern, the most fatal disasters would happen to the Spaniards. Thus it remained closely shut and unentered for many ages. At length King Roderigo, having less credulity but more courage and curiosity than his ancestors, commanded this formidable receipt to be opened. At entering, he began to suspect the traditions of the people to be true: a terrible tempest arose, and all the elements seemed united to embarrass him. Nevertheless, he ventured forwards into the cave, where he discerned by the light of his torches certain figures or statues of men, whose habiliments and arms were strange and uncouth. One of them had a sword of shining brafs, on which it was written in Arabic characters, that the time approached when the Spanish nation should be destroyed, and that it would not be long before the warriors, whose images were placed there, should arrive in Spain. The writer adds, "Je n'ai jamais été en aucun endroit, où l'on fasse plus de cas des contes fabuleux qu'en Espagne." Edit. a la Haye, 1691, tom. iii. pp. 158, 159. See *infr. sect. iii.* And the *Life of Cervantes*, by Don Gregorio Mayans, § 27, § 47, § 48, § 49.

<sup>2</sup> See Du Chesne, tom. v. p. 60; and *Mem. Lit.* xvii. 737, seq. It is in the royal library at Paris, Num. 8190. Probably the French Turpin in the British Museum is the same, Cod. MSS. Harl. 273, 23, f. 86. See *infr.* See instances of the English translating prose Latin books into English, and sometimes French, verse, sect. ii. *infr. passim.*

In the king's library at Paris, there is a translation of Dares Phrygius into French rhymes by Godfrey of Waterford an Irish Jacobin, a writer not mentioned by Tanner, in the thirteenth century. *Mem. Lit.* tom. xvii. p. 736. Compare sect. iii. *infr.* [Sir F. Madden refers us to De la Rue's *Essais sur les Bardes*, ii. 211, "who adds that this writer was assisted in his translation by Gervais Copale, and refers to MS. 7536 Bibl. [Imper.] for copies of the works ascribed to them."]

saders had made those subjects so fashionable in which Christians fought with Infidels. In a word, these volumes are the first specimens extant in this mode of writing. No European history before these has mentioned giants,<sup>1</sup> enchanters, dragons, and the like monstrous and arbitrary fictions, and the reason is obvious: they were written at a time when a new and unnatural mode of thinking took place in Europe, introduced by our communication with the East.

Hitherto I have considered the Saracens either at their immigration into Spain about the ninth century, or at the time of the crusades, as the first authors of romantic fabling among the Europeans. But a late ingenious critic has advanced an hypothesis, which assigns a new source and a much earlier date to these fictions. I will cite his opinion of this matter in his own words: "Our old romances of chivalry may be derived in a lineal descent from the ancient historical songs of the Gothic bards and scalds. Many of those songs are still preserved in the north, which exhibit all the seeds of chivalry, before it became a solemn institution. Even the common arbitrary fictions of romance were most of them familiar to the ancient scalds of the north, long before the time of the crusades. They believed the existence of giants and dwarfs, they had some notion of fairies, they were strongly possessed with the belief of spells and enchantment, and were fond of inventing combats with dragons and monsters."<sup>2</sup> Monsieur Mallet, a very able and elegant inquirer into the genius and antiquities of the northern nations, maintains the same doctrine. He seems to think, that many of the opinions and practices of the Goths, however obsolete, still obscurely subsist. He adds, "May we not rank among these, for example, that love and admiration for the profession of arms which prevailed among our ancestors even to fanaticism, mad as it were through system, and brave from a point of honour? Can we not explain from the Gothic religion, how judiciary combats and proofs by the ordeal, to the astonishment of posterity, were admitted by the legislature of all Europe:<sup>3</sup> and how, even to the present age, the people are still in-

<sup>1</sup> [Giants (*enta*) belonged to the earliest periods of northern myth.—*Wright.*]

<sup>2</sup> *Percy, On Ancient Metr. Rom.* i. pp. 3, 4, edit. 1767.

<sup>3</sup> For the judiciary combats, as also for common athletic exercises, they formed an amphitheatrical circus of rude stones. "Quædam [falsa] circos cladebant, in quibus gigantes et pugiles duello frenue decabant."—*Worm.* p. 62. And again, "Nec mora, circuatur campus, milite circus stipatur, concurrent pugiles," p. 65. It is remarkable, that circs of the same sort are still to be seen in Cornwall, so famous at this day for the athletic art: in which also they sometimes exhibited their scriptural interludes, vol. ii. p. 70. Frotho the Great, King of Denmark, in the first century, is said to have been the first who commanded all controversies to be decided by the sword.—*Worm.* p. 68. In favour of this barbarous institution it ought to be remembered, that the practice of thus marking out the place of battle must have prevented much bloodshed, and saved many innocent lives: for if either combatant was by any accident forced out of the circus, he was to lose his cause, or to pay three marks of pure silver as a redemption for his life.—*Worm.* p. 68, 69. In the year 987, the ordeal was substituted in Denmark for the duel; a mode of decision, at least in a political sense, less absurd, as it promoted military skill.

fatuated with a belief of the power of magicians, witches, spirits, and genii, concealed under the earth or in the waters? Do we not discover in these religious opinions that source of the marvellous with which our ancestors filled their romances; in which we see dwarfs and giants, fairies and demons?" &c.<sup>1</sup> And in another place: "The fortresses of the Goths were only rude castles situated on the summits of rocks, and rendered inaccessible by thick misshapen walls. As these walls ran winding round the castles, they often called them by a name which signified serpents or dragons; and in these they usually secured the women and young virgins of distinction, who were seldom safe at a time when so many enterprising heroes were rambling up and down in search of adventures. It was this custom which gave occasion to ancient romancers, who knew not how to describe anything simply, to invent so many fables concerning princesses of great beauty guarded by dragons, and afterwards delivered by invincible champions."<sup>2</sup>

I do not mean entirely to reject this hypothesis; but I will endeavour to show how far I think it is true, and in what manner or degree it may be reconciled with the system delivered above.

A few years before the birth of Christ, soon after Mithridates had been overthrown by Pompey, a nation of Asiatic Goths, who possessed that region of Asia which is now called Georgia, and is connected on the south with Persia, alarmed at the progressive encroachments of the Roman armies, retired in vast multitudes under the conduct of their leader Odin or Woden into the northern parts of Europe not subject to the Roman government, and settled in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and other districts of the Scandinavian territory.<sup>3</sup> As they brought with them many useful arts, particularly the knowledge of letters which Odin is said to have invented,<sup>4</sup> they were hospitably received by the natives, and by degrees

<sup>1</sup> Mallet, *Introduction à l'Histoire de Danemarc*, &c. tom. ii. p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. ch. ix. p. 243, tom. ii. [This and other similar passages in Mallet's lively history would form an excellent supplement to the Homeric allegories of Heraclides Ponticus.—Price.]

<sup>3</sup> "Unicam gentium Asiaticarum Immigrationem, in orbem Arctoum factam, nostræ antiquitates commemorant. Sed eam tamen non primam, verum circa annum tandem vicefimum quartum ante natum Christum, Romanis exercitibus auspiciis Pompeii Magni in Asie partes, Phrygia Minore graffantibus. Illa enim epocha ad hanc rem chronologi nostri utuntur. In cuius (Gylvi Suecicæ regis) tempora incidit Odinus, Asiaticæ immigrationis factæ anno 24 ante natum Christum antefignanus."—Crymogea, *Arngrim. Jon.* lib. i. cap. 4, pp. 30, 31, edit. Hamburg, 1609. See also Bartholin, *Antiquitat. Dan.* lib. ii. cap. 8, p. 407, iii. c. 2, p. 652, edit. 1689; Lazius, *de Gent. Migrat.* l. x. fol. 573, 30, edit. fol. 1600. Compare Ol. Rudbeck, cap. v. sect. 2, p. 95, xiv. sect. 2, p. 67. There is a memoir on this subject lately published in the *Pittsburgh Transactions*, but I choose to refer to original authorities. See tom. v. p. 297, edit. 1738.

<sup>4</sup> "Odino etiam et aliis, qui ex Asia hoc devenere, tribuunt multi antiquitatum Islandicarum periti; unde et Odinus Runhodii seu Runarum (i. e. *Literarum*) auctor vocatur."—Ol. Worm. *Liter. Runic.* cap. 20, edit. Hafn. 1651. Some writers refer the origin of the Grecian language, sciences, and religion to the Scythians, who were connected towards the south with Odin's Goths. I cannot

acquired a safe and peaceable establishment in the new country, which seems to have adopted their language, laws, and religion. Odin is said to have been styled a god by the Scandinavians; an appellation which the superior address and specious abilities of this Asiatic chief easily extorted from a more savage and uncivilized people.

This migration is confirmed by the concurrent testimonies of various historians: but there is no better evidence of it than that conspicuous similarity subsisting at this day between several customs of the Georgians, as described by Chardin, and those of certain cantons of Norway and Sweden, which have preserved their ancient manners in the purest degree.<sup>1</sup> Not that other striking implicit and internal proofs, which often carry more conviction than direct historical assertions, are wanting to point out this migration. The ancient inhabitants of Denmark and Norway inscribed the exploits of their kings and heroes on rocks in characters called runic; and of this practice many marks are said still to remain in those countries.<sup>2</sup> This art or custom of writing on rocks is Asiatic.<sup>3</sup> Modern travellers report, that there are Runic inscriptions now existing in the deserts of Tartary.<sup>4</sup> The written mountains of the Jews are an instance that this fashion was oriental.<sup>5</sup> Anciently, when one of

---

bring a greater authority than that of Salmasius, "Satis certum ex his colligi potest lingua, ut gentem Hellenicam a septentrione et Scythia originem traxisse, non a meridie. Inde literæ Græcorum, inde Musæ Pierides, inde sacrorum initia."—Salmas. *de Hellenis.* p. 400. As further proof I shall observe, that the ancient poet Thamyris was so much esteemed by the Scythians, on account of his poetry, *αθηρονα*, that they chose him their king.—Conon. *Narrat. Poet.* cap. vii. edit. Gal. But Thamyris was a Thracian: and a late ingenious antiquarian endeavours to prove that the Goths were descended from the Thracians, and that the Greeks and Thracians were only different clans of the same people.—Clarke's *Connexion*, &c. ch. ii. p. 65.

[See also Mr. Pinkerton's *Dissertation on the Goths*, and Dr. Jamieson's *Hermes Scythicus*.—Price. "Warton's hypothesis of the flight of Odin from the Roman power in Scandinavia," remarks Dunlop (*Hist. of Fid.* ed. 1845, p. 58), "and which exclusively assigns to all the eastern nations all the fictions of romance, seems to rest on no solid foundation. Indeed, Richardson, in the Preface to his *Persian Dictionary*, maintains that the whole was a mere Scaldic fable, invented to trace the origin of Gothic and Roman enmity, as the story of Dido and *Aeneas* was supposed to account for the irreconcileable antipathy of Rome and Carthage."]

<sup>1</sup> See Pontoppidan. *Nat. Hist. Norway*, tom. ii. c. 10, § 1, 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> See Saxo Grammat. *Præf. ad Hist. Dan.* And *Hist. lib. vii.* See also Ol. Worm. *Monum. Dan. lib. iii.*

<sup>3</sup> Paulus Jovius, a writer indeed not of the best credit, says that Annibal engraved characters on the Alpine rocks, as a testimony of his passage over them, and that they were remaining there two centuries ago.—*Hist. lib. xv.* p. 163.

<sup>4</sup> See *Voyage par Strahleberg, &c. A Description of the Northern and Eastern Parts of Europe and Asia.* Schroder says from Olaus Rudbeckius, that runes or letters were invented by Magog the Scythian, and communicated to Tuifco the celebrated German chieftain, in the year of the world 1799. *Præf. ad Lexicon Latino-Scandic.*

<sup>5</sup> [But Sir F. Madden points out that it is not certain that the inscriptions on the sculptured rocks were written by the Jews, and that it is not yet (1840) determined in what character they appear. He adds: "Engravings of the whole are given in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*, vol. ii. part i. p. 147."]

these northern chiefs fell honourably in battle, his weapons, his war-horse, and his wife, were consumed with himself on the same funeral pile.<sup>1</sup> I need not remind my readers how religiously this horrible ceremony of sacrificing the wife to the dead husband [used to be] observed in the east. There is a very remarkable correspondence, in numberless important and fundamental points, between the Druidical and the Persian superstitions: and notwithstanding the evidence of Cæsar, who speaks only from popular report and without precision on a subject which he cared little about, it is the opinion of the learned Banier, that the Druids were formed on the model of the Magi.<sup>2</sup> In this hypothesis he is seconded by a modern antiquary, who further supposes that Odin's followers imported this establishment into Scandinavia from the confines of Persia.<sup>3</sup> The Scandinavians attributed divine virtue to the mistletoe; it is mentioned in their *Edda*, or system of religious doctrines, where it is said to grow on the west side of Val-hall, or Odin's elysium.<sup>4</sup> The Gothic hell exactly resembles that which we find in the religious systems of the Persians, the most abounding in superstition of all the eastern nations. One of the circumstances is, and an oriental idea, that it is full of scorpions and serpents.<sup>5</sup> The doctrines of Zeno, who borrowed most of his opinions from the Persian philosophers, are not uncommon in the *Edda*. Lok, the evil deity of the Goths, is probably the Arimanus of the Persians. In some of the most ancient Icelandic chronicles, the Turks are mentioned as belonging to the jurisdiction of the Scandinavians. Mahomet, not so great an inventor as is imagined, adopted into his religion many favourite notions and superstitions from the bordering nations which were the offspring of the Scythians, and especially from the Turks. Accordingly, we find the Alcoran agreeing with the Runic theology in various instances. I will mention only one. It is one of the beatitudes of the Mahometan paradise, that blooming virgins shall administer the most luscious wines. Thus in Odin's Val-hall, or the Gothic elysium, the departed heroes received cups of the strongest mead and ale from the hands of the virgin-goddesses called Valkyres.<sup>6</sup> Alfred, in his Saxon account of the northern seas, taken from the mouth of Ohther, a Norwegian who had [formed an expedition] to discover a north-east passage into the Indies, constantly calls these

<sup>1</sup> See Keyler, p. 147. Two funeral ceremonies, one of burning, the other of burying, their dead, at different times prevailed in the north, and have distinguished two eras in the old northern history. The first was called the Age of Fire, the second the Age of Hills.

<sup>2</sup> *Mytholog. Expliq.* ii. p. 628.

<sup>3</sup> M. Mallet, *Hist. Dannem*, i. p. 56. See also Keyler, p. 152.

<sup>4</sup> *Edd. Iſl.* fab. xxviii. Compare Keyler, *Antiquit. Sel. Sept.* p. 304, *seq.* The Germans, a Teutonic tribe, call it to this day "the Branch of Spectres." But see Dr. Percy's ingenious note on this passage in the *Edda*.—*Northern Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 143.

<sup>5</sup> See Hyde, *Relig. Vet. Pers.* pp. 399, 404. But compare what is said of the *Edda*, towards the close of this discourse.

<sup>6</sup> Odin only drank wine in Val-hall.—*Edd. Myth.* xxxiv. See Keyler, p. 152.

nations the Orientals.<sup>1</sup> And as these eastern tribes brought with them into the north a certain degree of refinement, of luxury and splendour, which appeared singular and prodigious among barbarians; one of their early historians describes a person better dressed than usual, by saying, “he was so well clothed, that you might have taken him for one of the Asiatics.”<sup>2</sup> Wormius mentions a Runic incantation, in which an Asiatic enchantress is invoked.<sup>3</sup> Various other instances might here be added, some of which will occasionally arise in the future course of our inquiries.

It is notorious that many traces of oriental usages are found amongst all the European nations during their pagan state; and this phenomenon is rationally resolved, on the supposition that all Europe was originally peopled from the East. But as the resemblance which the pagan Scandinavians bore to the eastern nations in manners, monuments, opinions, and practices, is so very perceptible and apparent, an inference arises that their migration from the East must have happened at a period by many ages more recent, and therefore most probably about the time specified by their historians. In the mean time we must remember that a distinction is to be made between this expedition of Odin's Goths, who formed a settlement in Scandinavia, and those innumerable armies of barbarous adventurers who, some centuries afterwards, distinguished by the same name, at different periods overwhelmed Europe, and at length extinguished the Roman Empire.

When we consider the rapid conquests of the nations which may

<sup>1</sup> See Preface to Alfred's *Saxon Orosius*, published by Spelman. [And since by Daines Barrington.]—Spelm. *Vit. Alfredi*, Append. vi. [Oht-hera was not sent by Alfred. This voyage was undertaken for the gratification of his own curiosity, and the furtherance of his commercial views. He was doubtless ignorant of the existence of Asia. The Orientals, to use the language of the text, were those inhabitants of the Scandinavian peninsula, whose country lay upon his starboard quarter, while steering due north from Heligoland in Norway.—Price.]

<sup>2</sup> *Landnama-Saga*. See Mallet, *Hist. Dannem.* c. ii.

<sup>3</sup> *Lit. Russ.* p. 209, edit. 1651. The Goths came from the neighbourhood of Colchis, the region of witchcraft and the country of Medea, famous for her incantations. The eastern pagans from the very earliest ages have had their enchantments. “Now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.” *Exod.* vii. 11. See also vii. 18, 19, ix. 11, &c. When the people of Israel had overrun the country of Balak he invites Balaam, a neighbouring prince, to curse them or destroy them by magic, which he seems to have professed. “And the elders of Moab departed with the rewards of divination in their hand.” *Num.* xxii. 7. “Surely there is no enchantment against Israel,” xxiii. 23. “And he went out, as at other times, to seek for enchantments,” xxiv. 1, &c. Odin himself was not only a warrior, but a magician, and his Asiatics were called *Incantationum auctores*. *Chron. Norweg.* apud Bartholin, l. iii. c. 2, p. 657. *Crymog. Arngrim*, l. i. cap. vii. p. 511. From this source, those who adopt the principles just mentioned in this discourse may be inclined to think that the notion of spells got into the ritual of chivalry. In all legal single combats each champion attested upon oath that he did not carry about him any herb, spell, or enchantment. *Dugdal. Orig. Juridic.* p. 82. See Hickes's account of the silver Dano-Saxon shield, dug up in the Isle of Ely, having a magical Runic inscription, supposed to render those who bore it in battle invulnerable. *Thesaur. Dissertat. Epistol.* p. 187.

be comprehended under the common name of Scythians, and not only those conducted by Odin, but by Attila, Theodoric, and Genghis, we cannot ascribe such successes to brutal courage only. To say that some of these irresistible conquerors made war on a luxurious, effeminate, and enervated people, is a plausible and easy mode of accounting for their conquests; but this reason will not operate with equal force in the histories of Genghis and Tamerlane, who destroyed mighty empires founded on arms and military discipline, and who baffled the efforts of the ablest leaders. Their science and genius in war, such as it then was, cannot therefore be doubted: that they were not deficient in the arts of peace I have already hinted, and now proceed to produce more particular proofs. Innumerable and very fundamental errors have crept into our reasonings and systems about savage life, resulting merely from those strong and undistinguishing notions of barbarism which our prejudices have hastily formed concerning the character of all rude nations.<sup>1</sup>

Among other arts which Odin's Goths planted in Scandinavia, their skill in poetry, to which they were addicted in a peculiar manner, and which they cultivated with a wonderful enthusiasm, seems to be most worthy our regard, and especially in our present inquiry.<sup>2</sup>

As the principal heroes of their expedition into the north were honourably distinguished from the Europeans or original Scandinavians, under the name of *Aſe* or *Asiatics*, so the verses or language of this people were denominated *Aſamal*, or *Asiatic speech*.<sup>3</sup> Their poetry contained not only the praises of their heroes, but their popular traditions and their religious rites, and was filled with those fictions which the most exaggerated pagan superstition would naturally implant in the wild imaginations of an Asiatic people. And from this principle alone, I mean of their Asiatic origin, some critics would at once account for a certain capricious spirit of extravagance, and those bold eccentric conceptions which so strongly distinguish the old northern poetry.<sup>4</sup> Nor is this fantastic imagery the only mark of Asiaticism which appears in the Runic odes. They have a certain

<sup>1</sup> See this argument pursued in the second dissertation.

<sup>2</sup> [This was the case with all the branches of the Teutonic and northern races, and probably of the Celtic races also. It was in no way peculiar to the Goths.—*Wright.*]

<sup>3</sup> "Linguam Danicam antiquam, cuius in rythmis usus fuit, veteres appellantur Aſamal, id est Asiaticam, vel Aſarum Sermonem; quod cum ex Asia Odinus secum in Daniam, Norwegiam, Sueciam, aliasque regiones septentrionales invexerit." Stephan. *Prefat. ad Saxon. Grammat. Hisſ.*

<sup>4</sup> A most ingenious critic observes that, "what we have been long accustomed to call the oriental vein of poetry, because some of the earliest poetical productions have come to us from the East, is probably no more oriental than occidental." Blair's *Crit. Diss. on Oſſian*, vol. ii. p. 317. But all the later oriental writers through all ages have been particularly distinguished by this vein. Hence it is here characteristical of a country, not of an age. I will allow, on this writer's very just and penetrating principles, that an early northern ode shall be as sublime as an eastern one. Yet the sublimity of the latter shall have a different character; it will be more inflated and gigantic.

sublime and figurative cast of diction which is indeed one of their predominant characteristics.<sup>1</sup> I am very sensible that all rude nations are naturally apt to clothe their sentiments in this style. A propensity to this mode of expression is necessarily occasioned by the poverty of their language, which obliges them frequently to substitute similitudes and circumlocutions; it arises in great measure from feelings undisguised and unrestrained by custom or art, and from the genuine efforts of nature working more at large in uncultivated minds. In the infancy of society the passions and the imagination are alike uncontrolled. But another cause seems to have concurred in producing the effect here mentioned. When obvious terms and phrases evidently occurred, the Runic poets are fond of departing from the common and established diction. They appear to use circumlocution and comparisons not as a matter of necessity, but of choice and skill: nor are these metaphorical colourings so much the result of want of words as of warmth of fancy.<sup>2</sup>

Their warmth of fancy, however, if supposed to have proceeded from the principles above suggested, in a few generations after this migration into Scandinavia must have lost much of its natural heat and genuine force. Yet ideas and sentiments, especially of this sort, once imbibed, are long remembered and retained in savage life. Their religion, among other causes, might have contributed to keep this spirit alive, and to preserve their original stock of images and native mode of expression, unchanged and unabated by climate or country. In the mean time we may suppose, that the new situation of these people in Scandinavia might have added a darker shade and a more savage complexion to their former fictions and superstitions; and that the formidable objects of nature to which they became familiarised in those northern solitudes, the piny precipices, the frozen mountains, and the gloomy forests, acted on their imaginations, and gave a tincture of horror to their imagery.

A skill in poetry seems in some measure to have been a national

<sup>1</sup> Thus, a rainbow is called *the bridge of the gods*. Poetry, *the mead of Odin*. The earth, *the vessel that floats on ages*. A ship, *the horse of the waves*. Ice, *the vast bridge*. Herbs, *the fleece of the earth*. A battle, *a bath of blood*, *the hail of Odin*, *the shock of bucklers*. A tongue, *the sword of words*. Night, *the veil of cares*. Rocks, *the bones of the earth*. Arrows, *the hailstones of helmets*, &c. &c.

<sup>2</sup> In a strict geographical sense the original country of these Asiatic Goths might not be so situated as physically to have produced these effects. Yet it is to be observed that intercourse and vicinity are in this case sometimes equivalent to climate. The Persian traditions and superstitions were current even in the northern parts of Tartary. Georgia, however, may be fairly considered as a part of Persia. It is equal in fertility to any of the eastern Turkish provinces in Asia. It affords the richest wines and other luxuries of life in the greatest abundance. The most beautiful virgins for the seraglio are fetched from this province. In the mean time thus much at least may be said of a warm climate, exclusive of its supposed immediate physical influence on the human mind and temperament: it exhibits all the productions of nature in their highest perfection and beauty; while the excessive heat of the sun, and the fewer incitements to labour and industry, dispose the inhabitants to indolence and to living much abroad in scenes of nature. These circumstances are favourable to the operations of fancy.

science among the Scandinavians, and to have been familiar to almost every order and degree. Their kings and warriors partook of this epidemic enthusiasm, and on frequent occasions are represented as breaking forth into spontaneous songs and verses.<sup>1</sup> But the exercise of the poetical talent was properly confined to a stated profession: and with their poetry the Goths imported into Europe a species of poets or singers, whom they called Scalds or Polishers of Language. This order of men, as we shall see more distinctly below, was held in the highest honour and veneration: they received the most liberal rewards for their verses, attended the festivals of heroic chiefs, accompanied them in battle, and celebrated their victories.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Harold Hardraade, king of Norway, composed sixteen songs of his expedition into Africa. Asbjorn Pruda, a Danish champion, described his past life in nine strophes, while his enemy Bruce, a giant, was tearing out his bowels. “i. Tell my mother Suanhita in Denmark, that she will not this summer comb the hair of her son. I had promised her to return, but now my side shall feel the edge of the sword. ii. It was far otherwise, when we sate at home in mirth, cheering ourselves with the drink of ale; and coming from Hordeland passed the gulf in our ships; when we quaffed mead, and conversed of liberty. Now I alone am fallen into the narrow prisons of the giants. iii. It was far otherwise,” &c. Every stanza is introduced with the same choral burden. Bartholin. *Antiquit. Danic.* l. i. cap. 10, p. 158, edit. 1689. [Asbjorn Pruda lived at the close of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh century. But his Saga, which abounds in the most marvellous adventures, and this celebrated death-song, were fabricated in the fourteenth century. See Suhm’s *History of Denmark*, vol. iii. p. 294.—Price.] The noble epicarium of Regner Lodbrok is more commonly known. The champion Orvar-Odd, after his expeditions into various countries, sang, on his death-bed, the most memorable events of his life in metre. [Orvar-Odd’s Saga, from which Torfeus (*Hist. Norv.* p. i. pp. 263—284) has extracted the more sober parts of the narrative, is a romantic composition of the fourteenth or fifteenth century. It is even very uncertain whether such a person ever existed.—Price.] Hallmund, being mortally wounded, commanded his daughter to listen to a poem which he was about to deliver, containing histories of his victories, and to engrave it on tablets of wood. Bartholin. ibid. p. 162. Saxo Grammaticus gives us a regular ode, uttered by the son of a king of Norway, who by mistake had been buried alive, and was discovered and awakened by a party of soldiers digging for treasure. Sax. *Grammat.* l. 5, p. 50. There are instances recorded of their speaking in metre on the most common occurrences.

<sup>2</sup> The Sogdians were a people who lived eastward of the Caspian sea, not far from the country of Odin’s Goths. Quintus Curtius relates, that when some of that people were condemned to death by Alexander on account of a revolt, they rejoiced greatly, and testified their joy by singing verses and dancing. When the King enquired the reason of their joy, they answered, “that being soon to be restored to their ancestors by so great a conqueror, they could not help celebrating so honourable a death, which was the wish of all brave men, in their own accustomed songs,” lib. vii. c. 8. I am obliged to Dr. Percy for pointing out this passage. From the correspondence of manners and principles it holds forth between the Scandinavians and the Sogdians, it contains a striking proof of Odin’s migration from the east to the north: first, in the spontaneous exercise of the poetical talent; and secondly, in the opinion that a glorious or warlike death, which admitted them to the company of their friends and parents in another world, was to be embraced with the most eager alacrity and the highest sensations of pleasure. This is the doctrine of the *Edda*. In the same spirit, Ridens moriar is the triumphant close of Regner Lodbrok’s dying ode. [See Keyser, *ubi infra* p. 154.] I cannot help adding here another stroke from this ode, which seems also to be founded on eastern manners. He speaks with great rapture of drinking, “ex concavis crateribus craniorum.” The inhabitants of the island of Ceylon [used to]

These Scandinavian bards appear to have been esteemed and entertained in other countries besides their own, and by that means to have probably communicated their fictions to various parts of Europe. I will give my reasons for this supposition.

In the early ages of Europe, before many regular governments took place, revolutions, emigrations, and invasions were frequent and almost universal. Nations were alternately destroyed or formed; and the want of political security exposed the inhabitants of every country to a state of eternal fluctuation. That Britain was originally peopled from Gaul, a nation of the Celts, is allowed: but that many colonies from the northern parts of Europe were afterwards successively planted in Britain and the neighbouring islands, is an hypothesis equally rational, and not altogether destitute of historical evidence. Nor was any nation more likely than the Scandinavian Goths, I mean in their early periods, to make descents on Britain. They possessed the spirit of adventure in an eminent degree. They were habituated to dangerous enterprises. They were acquainted with distant coasts, exercised in navigation, and fond of making expeditions in hopes of conquest and in search of new acquisitions. As to Scotland and Ireland, there is the highest probability that the Scutes, who conquered both those countries, and possessed them under the names of Albin Scutes and Irin Scutes, were a people of Norway. The Caledonians are expressly called by many judicious antiquaries a Scandinavian colony. The names of places and persons, over all that part of Scotland which the Picts inhabited, are of Scandinavian extraction. A simple catalogue of them only would immediately convince us, that they are not of Celtic or British origin. Flaherty reports it as a received opinion and a general doctrine, that the Picts migrated into Britain and Ireland from Scandinavia.<sup>1</sup> I forbear to accumulate a pedantic parade of

---

carouse at their feasts from cups or bowls made of the skulls of their deceased ancestors. Ives's *Voyage to India*, ch. 5, p. 62, Lond. 1773, 4to. This practice these islanders undoubtedly received from the neighbouring continent. Compare Keyßer, *Antiquitat. Sel. Septentr.* p. 362, seq.

[Silius Italicus charges the Celts with indulging in a similar practice:

“At Celtæ vacui capitis circundare gaudent  
Offa (nefas) auro et mensis ea pocula servant.”

And the Longobardic and Bavarian histories record single examples of its occurrence for the gratification of personal revenge. But except the passage quoted by Warton, there is no authority for the existence of such a custom in the north as a national habit; and in this a violent and far-fetched metaphor has been erroneously translated, to be made the basis of an imputation equally revolting and absurd. The original Icelandic text stands thus:

“Dresckom bior at bragdi  
Ur biug-vidom hausfa.  
Instantly we shall drink ale  
From the skull's winding trees.”

Or in the sober phrase of common parlance: “We shall drink our beer out of horns.” The Celtic antiquaries may perhaps be able to offer a similar vindication of their uncivilized ancestors.—*Price*.

<sup>1</sup> It is conjectured by Wormius, that Ireland is derived from the Runic Yr, a bow, for the use of which the Irish were once famous. *Lit. Run.* c. xvii. p. 92. The

authorities on this occasion: nor can it be expected that I should enter into a formal and exact examination of this obscure and complicated subject in its full extent, which is here only introduced incidentally. I will only add, that Scotland and Ireland, as being situated more to the north, and probably less difficult of access than Britain, might have been objects on which our northern adventurers were invited to try some of their earliest excursions: and that the Orkney-islands remained long under the jurisdiction of the Norwegian potentates.

In these expeditions, the northern emigrants, as we shall prove more particularly below, were undoubtedly attended by their scalds or poets. Yet even in times of peace, and without the supposition of conquest or invasion, the Scandinavian scalds might have been well known in the British islands. Possessed of a specious and pleasing talent, they frequented the courts of the British, Scotch, and Irish chieftains. They were itinerants by their institution, and made voyages out of curiosity or in quest of rewards to those islands or coasts which lay within the circle of their maritime knowledge. By these means they established an interest, rendered their profession popular, propagated their art, and circulated their fictions, in other countries and at a distance from home. Torfæus asserts positively, that various Icelandic odes now remain, which were sung by the Scandinavian bards before the kings of England and Ireland, and for which they received liberal gratuities.<sup>1</sup> They were more especially cared for and rewarded at the courts of those princes, who were distinguished for their warlike character and their passion for military glory.

Olaus Wormius informs us, that great numbers of the northern scalds constantly resided in the courts of the kings of Sweden, Denmark, and England.<sup>2</sup> Hence the tradition in an antient Icelandic Saga or poetical history may be explained; which says that Odin's language was originally used not only in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, but even in England.<sup>3</sup> Indeed it may be naturally concluded

---

Asiatics near the lake Maeotis, from which Odin led his colony in Europe, were celebrated archers. Hence Hercules in Theocritus, *Idyll. xiii. 56.*

—Μακρινοὶ λαβοὶ επαντμεα τοῖς.

Compare Salmas. *de Hellen.* p. 369. And Flahert. *Ogyg.* part iii. cap. xviii. p. 188. edit. 1685. Stillingfleet's *Orig. Brit. Praef.* p. xxxviii.

[The Celtic population of Ireland precedes the period of legitimate history. Their migration to Scotland has been referred with great probability to the earlier part of the fourth century. But the origin of the Picts, their language, the etymology "of the names of places and persons over that part of Scotland which they inhabited," is a subject which divides the opinions of Scotch antiquaries. See Mr. Chalmers's *Caledonia*, and Dr. Jamieson's *Etymological Scotch Dictionary* (Introduction).—Price.]

<sup>1</sup> *Torf. Hist. Orcad.* in Praefat. [See the Sagas of Egill, and Gunnlaug Ormstunga.—Price.]

<sup>2</sup> *Lit. Dan.* p. 195, ed. 4to.

<sup>3</sup> Bartholin. iii. 2, p. 651. It was a constant old British tradition, that King Arthur conquered Ireland, Gothland, Denmark, and Norway. See Galfrid. Monum. ix. 11, Rob. of Glouc. ed. Hearne, pp. 180, 182. What is said in the text must have greatly facilitated the Saxon and Danish conquests in England. The works of

from these suggestions, that the Scandinavian tongue became familiar in the British islands by the songs of the scalds: unless it be rather presumed, that a previous knowledge of that tongue in Britain was the means of facilitating the admission of those poets, and preparing the way for their reception.

And here it will be much to our present argument to observe, that some of the old Gothic and Scandinavian superstitions are to this day retained in the English language. Mara, from whence our Nightmare is derived, was in the Runic theology a spirit or spectre of the night, which seized men in their sleep, and suddenly deprived them of speech and motion.<sup>1</sup> Nicka was the Gothic demon who inhabited the element of water, and who strangled persons that were drowning.<sup>2</sup> Boh was one of the most fierce and formidable of the Gothic generals,<sup>3</sup> and the son of Odin: the mention of whose name was sufficient to spread an immediate panic among his enemies.<sup>4</sup>

---

the genuine Cædmon are written in the language of the antient Angles, who were nearly connected with the Jutes. Hence that language resembled the antient Danish, as appears from passages of Cædmon cited by Wanley. Hence also it happened, that the later Dano-Saxon dialect, in which Junius's *Poetical Paraphrase of Genesis* was written, is likewise so very similar to the language of the antient Angles, who settled in the more northern parts of England. And in this dialect, which indeed prevailed in some degree almost over all England, many other poems are composed, mentioned likewise in Wanley's Catalogue. [See the Preface to this edition.—Price.] It is the constant doctrine of the Danish historians, that the Danes and Angles, whose successors gave the name to this island, had the same origin. [Was not Odin's language Teutonic, in the broad sence of the term? It would be merely called Woden, in dialectic form.—Wright. Sir F. Madden refers us to Thorpe's *Cædmon*, 1832, Introd., for an account of this "imaginary Dano-Saxon dialect."]

<sup>1</sup> See Keyler, *Antiquit. Sel. Septentrional.* p. 497, edit. 1720.

<sup>2</sup> See Keyler, *ut supr.* p. 261. And in Addend. *ibid.* p. 588.

<sup>3</sup> See Keyler, *ibid.* p. 105, p. 130.

<sup>4</sup> See Temple's *Essays*, part 4, pag. 346. See also instances of conformity between English and Gothic superstitions in Bartholinus, l. ii. cap. 2, pp. 262, 266. It may be urged, that these superstitions might be introduced by the Danes; of whom I shall speak below. But this brings us to just the same point. The learned Hickes was of opinion from a multitude of instances, that our trial by a jury of twelve was an early Scandinavian institution, and that it was brought thence into England. Yet he supposes, at a period later than is necessary, the Norman invasion. See Wootton's *Conspicetus of Hickes' Thesaur.* pag. 46. And Hickes' *Thesaur. Diff.* 'at. *Epistol.* vol. i. p. 38, *seq.* The number twelve was sacred among the Septentrional tribes. Odin's Judges are twelve, and have twelve seats in Gladheim. *Edd. IJ.* fab. vii. The God of the *Edda* has twelve names, *ibid.* fab. i. An aristocracy of twelve is a well known antient establishment in the north. In the Dialogue between Hervor and Angantyr, the latter promises to give Hervor twelve men's deaths. [He gives her that which is to be the death of twelve men—the sword Tirfing.—Price.] *Hervarar-Saga*, apud Ol. Verel, cap. vii. p. 91. The Druidical circular monuments of separate stones erect are more frequently of the number twelve than of any other number. See Borlase, *Antiquit. Cornw.* b. iii. ch. vii. 1769. And Toland, *Hist. Druid.* pp. 89, 158, 160. See also Martin's *Hebrid.* p. 9. In Zealand and Sweden many antient circular monuments, consisting each of twelve rude stones, still remain, which were the places of judicature. My late very learned, ingenious, and respected friend, Dr. Borlase, pointed out to me monuments of the same sort in Cornwall. Compare Keyler, p. 93. And it will illustrate remarks already made, and the principles insinuated in this Dissertation, to observe, that these monuments are found in Persia near Tauris. [See Chardin, *Voyages*, 1686, p. 377. It is af-

toft. Epistol. vol. i. p. 38, *seq.* The number twelve was sacred among the Septentrional tribes. Odin's Judges are twelve, and have twelve seats in Gladheim. *Edd. IJ.* fab. vii. The God of the *Edda* has twelve names, *ibid.* fab. i. An aristocracy of twelve is a well known antient establishment in the north. In the Dialogue between Hervor and Angantyr, the latter promises to give Hervor twelve men's deaths. [He gives her that which is to be the death of twelve men—the sword Tirfing.—Price.] *Hervarar-Saga*, apud Ol. Verel, cap. vii. p. 91. The Druidical circular monuments of separate stones erect are more frequently of the number twelve than of any other number. See Borlase, *Antiquit. Cornw.* b. iii. ch. vii. 1769. And Toland, *Hist. Druid.* pp. 89, 158, 160. See also Martin's *Hebrid.* p. 9. In Zealand and Sweden many antient circular monuments, consisting each of twelve rude stones, still remain, which were the places of judicature. My late very learned, ingenious, and respected friend, Dr. Borlase, pointed out to me monuments of the same sort in Cornwall. Compare Keyler, p. 93. And it will illustrate remarks already made, and the principles insinuated in this Dissertation, to observe, that these monuments are found in Persia near Tauris. [See Chardin, *Voyages*, 1686, p. 377. It is af-

The fictions of Odin and of his Scandinavians must have taken still deeper root in the British islands, at least in England, from the Saxon and Danish invasions.

That the tales of the Scandinavian scalds flourished among the Saxons, who succeeded to the Britons, and became possessors of England in the sixth century, may be justly presumed.<sup>1</sup> The Saxons were originally seated in the Cimbric Chersonese, or those territories which have been since called Jutland, Angelen, and Holstein; and were fond of tracing the descent of their princes from Odin.<sup>2</sup> They were therefore a part of the Scandinavian tribes. They imported with them into England the old Runic language and letters. This appears from inscriptions on coins,<sup>3</sup> stones,<sup>4</sup> and other monuments;

nishing, that after the most evident proofs of these stone monuments being the production of our northern ancestors, writers will persist without any authority whatever in calling them Druidical.—*Douce*. It is also “astonishing,” that with such “evident proofs” of their existence in almost every part of Europe and Asia, they should be exclusively assigned either to “our northern ancestors,” or their Celtic antagonists. The occurrence of such monuments in Cornwall, where the Saxons only obtained a footing at a very late period, and in those parts of Ireland which were frequented by neither Saxons nor Scandinavians, clearly forbids the assumption of their Teutonic origin; while their name (Thing-stadar), and the purpose to which they were applied in the North of Europe, may receive an illustration from the page of Homer :

Κήρυκες δ' ἄρα λαὸς ἱρίτων· διὰ γέροντος  
Εἰσατ' ἡρώες ἔστοιτος λέθες, ἵστοι δὲ κακλαργοί.—*Il. xviii. 503.*

These “sacred circles” in the North were not only used as places of public assembly, but were the scenes of all judicial proceedings. From a passage in the 67th chapter of *Egils-Saga*, there is reason to believe, that they were also made the theatres of the “trial by battle.” The Irish antiquaries consider them to have been places of public worship. Magh-Adhair, a plain of adoration, where an open temple consisting of a circle of tall straight stone pillars with a very large flat stone called cromleac, serving for an altar, constructed by the Druids and similar to that in Exodus xxiv. “And Moses . . . . builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.” O’Brien in *voc.*—Price.] Geoffrey of Monmouth affords instances in his *British History*. The knights sent into Wales by Fitzhammon, in 1091, were twelve. Powel, p. 124, *sub anno*. See also an instance in Du Carell, *Anglo-Norman Antig.* p. 9. It is probable that Charlemagne formed his twelve peers on this principle. From whom Spenser evidently took his twelve Knights.

[In the poem of Beowulf “twolf wintra tid,” the time of twelve winters, is evidently a mere epic form of expression to denote an indefinite period. It is like “forty days of the Hebrews, the ἡμέρας of the *Iliad*, the leven of *Piers Plowman*. This number therefore ought not to be interpreted too literally, unless supported by the context.—Price.]

<sup>1</sup> “Ex veterioribus poetis Cimbrorum, nempe Scaldis et Theotisca gentis verifieritoribus, plane multa, ut par est credere, sumpserit.” Hickes’ *Thesaur.* i. p. 101. See p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> See Gibson’s *Chron. Saxon.* p. 12, *seq.* Historians mention Woden’s Beorth, *i. e.* Woden’s hill, in Wiltshire. See Milton, *Hist. Engl.* An. 588.

<sup>3</sup> See Sir A. Fountaine’s *Pref. Saxon Money*. Offa. Rex. Sc. Botred Monetarius, &c. See also Serenii *Diction. Anglo-Suecico-Latin.* *Præf.* pag. 21.

<sup>4</sup> See Hickes’ *Thesaur. Baptisterium Bridekirkenæ*, par. iii. p. 4. tab. ii. *Saxum Revellense apud Scotos.* *Ibid. tab. iv. pag. 5.*—*Crux Lapidea apud Beaucaftle. Wanley Catal. MSS. Anglo-Sax.* pag. 248, *ad calc.* Hickes’ *Thesaur.* *Annulus aureus. Drake’s York, Append.* p. 102, tab. N. 26. And Gordon’s *Itin. Septentr.* p. 168.

and from some of their manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> It is well known that Runic inscriptions have been discovered in Cumberland and Scotland : and that there is even extant a coin of King Offa with a Runic legend.<sup>2</sup> But the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity, which happened before the seventh century, entirely banished the common use of those characters,<sup>3</sup> which were esteemed unhallowed and necromantic ; and with their antient superstitions, which yet prevailed for some time in the popular belief, abolished in some measure their native and original vein of poetic fabling.<sup>4</sup> They suddenly became a mild and polished people, addicted to the arts of peace and the exercise of devotion ; and the poems they have left us are chiefly moral rhapsodies, scriptural histories or religious invocations.<sup>5</sup> Yet even in these pieces they have frequent allusions to the old scaldic fables and heroes. Thus, in an Anglo-Saxon poem on Judith Holofernes is called Balder, or leader and prince of warriors ; and in a poetical paraphrase on Genesis, Abimelech has the same appellation.<sup>6</sup> This Balder was a famous chieftain of the Asiatic Goths, the son of Odin, and supposed to inhabit a magnificent hall in the future place of rewards. The same Anglo-Saxon paraphraſt, in his prosopopœia of Satan addressing his companions plunged in the infernal abyſs, adopts many images and expressions used in the very sublime description of

<sup>1</sup> See Hickes' *Thesaur.* par. i. pages 135, 136, 148, par. iii. tab. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. It may be conjectured, that these characters were introduced by the Danes. It is certain that they never grew into common use. They were at least inconvenient. We have no remains of Saxon writing so old as the fifth century. Nor are there any of the seventh, except a very few charters. See Hickes' *Thesaur.* par. i. page 169. See also *Charta Odilredi ad Monasterium de Berking.* Tab. i. *Casley's Cat. Bibl. Reg.* [The runes were the letters of the people, and not capitals, distinguished from small letters. The Scandinavian people did not write, except on stones and wood, they had neither paper nor parchment. The runes found in England are mostly not Danish, but Anglo-Saxon.—*Wright.*]

<sup>2</sup> See *Archæol.* vol. ii. p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> But see Hickes, *ubi supr.* i. p. 140.

<sup>4</sup> It has been suggested to me by an ingenious friend, that Guy and Sir Bevis, the first of whom lived in the reign of Athelstan, and the latter, as some suppose, in that of Edgar, both Christian champions against the pagan Danes, were originally subjects of the genuine Saxon bards. But I rather think they began to be celebrated in or after the crusades, the nature of which expeditions dictated to the romance writers, and brought into vogue, stories of Christians fighting with infidel heroes. The cause was the same, and the circumstances partly parallel ; and this being once the fashion, they consulted their own histories for heroes, and combats were feigned with Danish giants, as well as with the Saracen. See *infr.* sect. iii. There is the story of Bevis in *Britiſh, Yſtori Bouu o Hamtun.* *Lhuyd's Arch. Brit.* p. 264.

<sup>5</sup> Except an ode on Athelstan, translated below. See sect. i. See also the description of the city of Durham. Hickes, p. 179. It has nothing of the wild strain of poetry. The saints and relics of Durham Church seem to have struck the poet most in describing that city. I cannot discern the supposed sublimity of those mysterious dithyrambics, which close the Saxon Menologe or poetic calendar, written about the tenth century, printed by Hickes, *Gramm. Anglo-Sax.* p. 207. [And again by Fox, 1830.] They seem to be prophecies and proverbs, or rather splendid fragments from different poems, thrown together without connection.

<sup>6</sup> See Hickes' *Thesaur.* i. p. 10, who adds many more instances.

the Eddic hell:<sup>1</sup> Henry of Huntingdon<sup>2</sup> complains of certain extraneous words and uncommon figures of speech in a Saxon ode on a victory of King Athelstan. These were all scaldic expressions or allusions. But I will give a literal English translation of this poem, which cannot be well understood without premising its occasion. In the year 938, Anlaff,<sup>3</sup> a pagan king of the Hybernians and the adjacent isles, invited by Constantine king of the Scots, entered the river Aby or Humber with a strong fleet. Our Saxon king Athelstan and his brother Eadmund [ætheling] met them with a numerous army near a place called Brunenburgh, and after a most obstinate and bloody resistance, drove them back to their ships. The battle lasted from day-break till the evening. On the side of Anlaff were slain five petty kings and seven chiefs or generals. “King Adelstan, the glory of leaders, the giver of gold chains to his nobles, and his brother Eadmund, both shining with the brightness of a long train of ancestors, struck [the adversary] in war; at Brunenburgh, with the edge of the sword, they clove the wall of shields. The high banners fell. The earls of the departed Edward<sup>4</sup> fell; for it was born within them, even from the loins of their kindred, to defend the treasures and the houses of their country, and their gifts, against the hatred of strangers. The nation of the Scots, and the fatal inhabitants of ships, fell. The hills resounded, and the armed men were covered with sweat. From the time the sun, the king of stars, the torch of the eternal one, rose cheerful above the hills, till he returned to his habitation. There lay many of the northern men, pierced with lances; they lay wounded, with their shields pierced through: and also the Scots, the hateful harvest of battle. The chosen bands of the West-Saxons, going out to battle, pressed on the steps of the detested nations, and slew their flying rear with sharp and bloody swords. The soft effeminate men yielded up their spears. The Mercians did not fear or fly the rough game of the hand. There was no safety to them, who fought the land with Anlaff in the bosom of the ship, to die in fight. Five youthful kings fell in the place of fight, slain with swords; and seven captains of Anlaff, with the innumerable army of Scotish mariners: there the lord of the [Northernmens] was chased: and their army, now made small, was driven to the prow of the ship. The ship sounded with the waves; and the king, marching into the yellow sea, escaped alive. And so it was, the wise northern king Constantine, a veteran chief, returning by flight to his own army, bowed down in the camp, left his own son worn out with wounds in the place of slaughter; in

<sup>1</sup> Fab. xlix. See Hickes, *ubi supr.* p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Who has greatly misrepresented the sense by a bad Latin translation. *Hist. lib. v. p. 203.*

<sup>3</sup> [See Mr. Turner's *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. i. p. 343. Anlaf, whom Athelstan had expelled from the kingdom of North-humbria, was in all probability a Christian. Wulfstan, Archbishop of York, who united with Anlaf in his second attempt to recover his inheritance, would hardly have fought under a Pagan banner.—Price.]

vain did he lament his earls, in vain his lost friends. Nor less did Anlaff, the yellow-haired leader, the battle-axe of slaughter, a youth in war, but an old man in understanding, boast himself a conqueror in fight, when the darts flew against Edward's earls, and their banners met. Then those northern soldiers, covered with shame, the sad refuse of darts in the resounding whirlpool of Humber, departed in their ships with rudders, to seek through the deep the Irish city and their own land. While both the brothers, the king and Clito, lamenting even their own victory, together returned home; leaving behind them the flesh-devouring raven, the dark-blue toad greedy of slaughter, the black crow with horny bill, and the hoarse toad, the eagle a companion of battles, with the devouring kite, and that brindled savage beast the wolf of the wood, to be glutted with the white food of the slain. Never was so great a slaughter in this island; since the Angles and Saxons, the fierce beginners of war, coming hither from the east, and seeking Britain through the wide sea, overcame the Britons excelling in honour, and gained possession of their land.”<sup>1</sup>

This piece, and many other Saxon odes and songs now remaining, are written in a metre much resembling that of the scaldic dialogue at the tomb of Angantyr,<sup>2</sup> which has been beautifully translated into English, in the true spirit of the original, and in a genuine strain of poetry, by Gray. The extemporaneous effusions of the glowing bard seem naturally to have fallen into this measure, and it was probably more easily suited to the voice or harp. Their versification for the most part seems to have been that of the Runic poetry.

As literature, the certain attendant, as it is the parent, of true religion and civility, gained ground among the Saxons,<sup>3</sup> poetry no longer remained a separate science, and the profession of bard seems gradually to have declined among them: I mean the bard under those appropriated characteristics and that peculiar appointment which he sustained among the Scandinavian pagans. Yet their national love of verse and music still so strongly predominated, that in the place of their old scalds a new rank of poets arose, called Gleemen or Harpers.<sup>4</sup> These probably gave rise to the order of English Minstrels, which flourished till the sixteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> The original was first printed by Wheloc in the *Saxon Chronicle*, p. 555. Cant. 1644. See Hickes' *Thes. Prefat.* p. xiv. And *ibid. Gramm. Anglo-Sax.* p. 181. [At the close of this Dissertation the reader will find the original ode and a nearly literal version of it. The translation in the text was made from the Latin of Gibson, and of course shares the faults of its original.—*Price.*]

<sup>2</sup> [The invocation of Hervor at the tomb of her father Angantyr was translated in prose by Dr. Hickes. It was republished with emendations by Dr. Percy in 1763, and has since been closely and paraphrastically versified by Mr. Mathias and Miss Seward.—*Park.*]

<sup>3</sup> [Warton was not acquainted with the Anglo-Saxon poetry.—*Wright.* This deficiency, however, will be partly at least supplied by a new chapter on the Anglo-Saxon literature written specially for this edition by Mr. Henry Sweet, of Balliol College, Oxford.]

<sup>4</sup> Gleeman answers to the Latin Joculator. Fabyan, speaking of Blagebride, an

And here I stop to point out one of the principal reasons why the Scandinavian bards have transmitted to modern times so much more of their native poetry than the rest of their southern neighbours. It is true that the inhabitants of Sweden, Denmark and Norway, whether or no from their Asiatic origin, from their poverty which compelled them to seek their fortunes at foreign courts by the exercise of a popular art, from the success of their bards, the nature of their republican government, or their habits of unsettled life, were more given to verse than any other Gothic or even Celtic tribe. But this is not all: they remained pagans, and retained their original manners, much longer than any of their Gothic kindred. They were not completely converted to Christianity till the tenth century.<sup>1</sup> Hence, under the concurrence however of some of the causes just mentioned, their scaldic profession acquired greater degrees of strength and of maturity, and from an uninterrupted possession through many ages of the most romantic religious superstitions and the preservation of those rough manners which are so favourable to the poetical spirit, was enabled to produce not only more genuine but more numerous compositions. True religion would have checked the impetuosity of their passions, suppressed their wild exertions of fancy, and banished that striking train of imagery, which their poetry derived from a barbarous theology. This circumstance also suggests to our consideration those superior advantages and opportunities arising from leisure and length of time, which they enjoyed above others, of circulating their poetry far and wide, of giving a general currency to their mode of fabling, of rendering their skill in versification more universally and familiarly known, and a more conspicuous and popular object of admiration or imitation to the neighbouring countries. Hence too it has happened, that modern times have not only attained much fuller information concerning their historical transactions, but are so intimately acquainted with the peculiarities of their character.

It is probable, that the Danish invasions produced a considerable alteration in the manners of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. Although their connections with England were transient and interrupted, and on the whole scarcely lasted two hundred years, yet many of the Danish customs began to prevail among the inhabitants, which seem to have given a new turn to their temper and genius. The Danish fashion of excessive drinking, for instance, a vice almost natural to

ancient British king, famous for his skill in poetry and music, calls him "a conyng musicyan, called of the Britons god of Gleemen." *Chron. f. xxxii. ed. 1533.* This Fabyan translated from Geoffrey of Monmouth's account of the same British king, "ut deus joculatorum videretur." *Hist. Brit. lib. i. cap. 22.* It appears from the injunctions given to the British church in the year 680, that female harpers were not then uncommon. It is decreed that no bishop, or any ecclesiastic, shall keep or have citharedas, and it is added quæcumque Symphoniaca; nor permit plays or sports, ludos vel jocos, undoubtedly mimical and gesticulatory entertainments, to be exhibited in his presence. *Malmeb. Ges. Pontif. lib. iii. p. 263, edit. vet. And Concil. Spelman. tom. i. p. 159, edit. 1639.*

<sup>1</sup> See Bishop Lloyd's *Hist. Account of Church Government in Great Britain, &c.* chap. i. sect. xi. 1684. And *Crymog. Arngrim. l. i. cap. 10, p. 104.*

the northern nations, became so general among the Anglo-Saxons, that it was found necessary to restrain so pernicious and contagious a practice by a particular statute.<sup>1</sup> Hence it seems likely, that so popular an entertainment as their poetry gained ground; especially if we consider, that in their expeditions against England they were of course attended by many northern scalds, who constantly made a part of their military retinue, and whose language was understood by the Saxons. Rogwald, lord of the Orcades, who was also himself a poet, going on an expedition into Palestine, carried with him two Icelandic bards.<sup>2</sup> The noble *ode*, called in the northern chronicles the *Elogium of Hacon*,<sup>3</sup> king of Norway, was composed, on a battle in which that prince with eight of his brothers fell, by the scald Eyvynnd who for his superior skill in poetry was called the *Cross of Poets* [Eyvindr Skálldaspillir,<sup>4</sup>] and fought in the battle which he celebrated.

In this *ode* are these very sublime imageries and prosopopœias.

“The goddesses who preside over battles come, sent forth by Odin. They go to choose among the princes of the illustrious race of Yngvona man who is to perish, and to go to dwell in the palace of the gods.”

“Gondula leaned on the end of her lance, and thus bespoke her companions. The assembly of the gods is going to be increased: the gods invite Hacon, with his numerous host, to enter the palace of Odin.”

“Thus spake these glorious nymphs of war: who were seated on their horses, who were covered with their shields and helmets, and appeared full of some great thought.”

“Hacon heard their discourse. Why, said he, why hast thou disposed of the battle? Were we not worthy to have obtained of the gods a more perfect victory? It is we, she replied, who have given it thee. It is we who have put thine enemies to flight.”

“Now, added she, let us push forward our steeds across those green worlds, which are the residence of the gods. Let us go tell Odin that the king is coming to visit him in his palace.”

“When Odin heard this news, he said, Hermode and Brago, my sons, go to meet the king: a king, admired by all men for his valour, approaches to our hall.”

<sup>1</sup> See Lambarde's *Archaionom*. And Bartholin. ii. c. xii. p. 542.

<sup>2</sup> Ol. Worm. *Lit. Run.* p. 195, edit. 1636.

<sup>3</sup> Snorron. *Hist. Reg. Sept.* i. p. 163. This *ode* was written so early as the year 960. There is a great variety and boldness in the transitions. An action is carried on by a set of the most awful ideal personages, finely imagined. The goddesses of battle, Odin, his sons Hermode and Brago, and the spectre of the deceased king, are all introduced, speaking and acting as in a drama. The panegyric is nobly conducted, and arises out of the sublimity of the fiction.

[A somewhat different version of the above *ode* is printed in Percy's *Five Roman Pieces*. By the wolf Fenris, he observes, the northern nations understood a kind of demon or evil principle, at enmity with the gods, who though at present chained up from doing mischief, was hereafter to break loose and destroy the world. See *Edda*.—*Park.*]

<sup>4</sup> [Skálldaspillir, poetarum alpha, cui omnes invident poetae.]

“ At length King Hacon approaches ; and arriving from the battle is still all besprinkled and running down with blood. At the sight of Odin, he cries out, Ah ! how severe and terrible does this god appear to me !”

“ The hero Brago replies, Come, thou that wast the terror of the bravest warriors : Come hither, and rejoin thine eight brothers : the heroes who reside here shall live with thee in peace : Go, drink ale in the circle of heroes.”

“ But this valiant king exclaims, I will still keep my arms : a warrior ought carefully to preserve his mail and helmet : it is dangerous to be a moment without the spear in one’s hand.”—

“ The wolf Fenris shall burst his chains and dart with rage upon his enemies, before so brave a king shall again appear upon earth,” &c.

Hacon, earl of Norway, was accompanied by five celebrated bards in the battle of Jomsburgh : and we are told, that each of them sang an ode to animate the soldiers before the engagement began.<sup>1</sup> They appear to have been regularly brought into action. Olave, a king of Norway, when his army was prepared for the onset, placed three scalds about him, and exclaimed aloud, “ You shall not only record in your verses what you have heard, but what you have seen.” They each delivered an ode on the spot.<sup>2</sup> These northern chiefs appear to have so frequently hazarded their lives with such amazing intrepidity, merely in expectation of meriting a panegyric from their poets, the judges and the spectators of their gallant behaviour. That scalds were common in the Danish armies when they invaded England, appears from a stratagem of Alfred who, availing himself of his skill in oral poetry and playing on the harp, entered the Danish camp habited in that character, and procured a hospitable reception. This was in the year 878.<sup>3</sup> Anlaff,<sup>4</sup> a Danish king, used the same disguise for reconnoitring the camp of our Saxon monarch Athelstan : taking his station near Athelstan’s pavilion, he entertained the king and his chiefs with his verses and music, and was dismissed with an honourable reward.<sup>5</sup> As Anlaff’s dialect must have discovered him to have been a Dane, here is a proof, of which I shall bring more, that the Saxons, even in the midst of mutual hostilities, treated the Danish scalds with favour and respect. That the Icelandic bards were common in England during the Danish invasions, there are numerous proofs. Egill, a celebrated Icelandic poet, having murdered the son

<sup>1</sup> Bartholin. p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> *Olaf. Sag.* apud Verel. ad Herv. *Sag.* p. 178. Bartholin. p. 172.

<sup>3</sup> Ingulph. *Hist.* p. 869. *Malmsb.* ii. c. 4, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> [This is the same Anlaf mentioned above. Though of Danish descent, yet as his family had possessed the throne of North-humbraria for more than one generation, it is most probable that he spoke the dialect of his province, or what Hickes calls the Dano-Saxon.—*Price.*]

<sup>5</sup> *Malmsb.* ii. 6. I am aware, that the truth of both these anecdotes respecting Alfred and Anlaff has been controverted. But no sufficient argument has yet been offered for pronouncing them spurious or even suspicious. See an ingenious Dissertation in *Archæologia*, vol. ii. p. 100, seq.

and many of the friends of Eric Blodoxe, king of Denmark or Norway, then residing in Northumberland, and which he had just conquered, procured a pardon by singing before the king, at the command of his queen Gunhilde, an extemporaneous ode.<sup>1</sup> Egill compliments the king, who probably was his patron, with the appellation of the English chief. “I offer my freight to the king. I owe a poem for my ransom. I present to the English chief the mead of Odin.”<sup>2</sup> Afterwards he calls this Danish conqueror the commander of the Scotish fleet. “The commander of the Scotish fleet fat-tened the ravenous birds. The sister of Nera [Death] trampled on the foe: she trampled on the evening food of the eagle.” The Scots usually joined the Danish or Norwegian invaders in their attempts on the northern parts of Britain;<sup>3</sup> and from this circumstance a new argument arises, to shew the close communication and alliance which must have subsisted between Scotland and Scandinavia. Egill, although of the enemy’s party,<sup>4</sup> was a singular favourite of King Athelstan. Athelstan once asked Egill how he escaped due punishment from Eric Blodoxe, the king of Northumberland, for the very capital and enormous crime which I have just mentioned. On which Egill immediately related the whole of that transaction to the Saxon king, in a sublime ode still extant.<sup>5</sup> On another occasion Athelstan presented Egill with two rings and two large cabinets filled with silver, promising at the same time to grant him any gift or favour which he should choose to request. Egill, struck with gratitude, immediately composed a panegyrical poem in the Norwegian language, then common to both nations, on the virtues of Athelstan, which the latter as generously requited with two marcs of pure gold.<sup>6</sup> Here is likewise another argument, that the Saxons had no small esteem for the scaldic poetry. It is highly reasonable to conjecture, that our Danish king Canute, a potentate of most extensive jurisdiction, and not only king of England, but of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, was not without the customary retinue of the northern courts, in which the scalds held so distinguished and important a station. Human nature, in a savage state, aspires to some species of merit, and in every stage of society is alike susceptible of flattery, when addressed to the reigning passion. The sole object of the northern princes was military glory. It is certain that Canute delighted in this mode of entertainment, which he patronised and liberally rewarded. It is related in *Knytlinga-Saga*, or Canute’s History, that he com-

<sup>1</sup> See *Crymogr. Angrim. Jon.* lib. ii. p. 125, edit. 1609.

<sup>2</sup> See *Ol. Worm. Lit. Run.* p. 227, 195. All the chiefs of Eric were also present at the recital of this ode, which is in a noble strain.

<sup>3</sup> See the Saxon Epinicion in praise of King Athelstan, *supr. citat. Hen. Hunting.* 1. v. pp. 203, 204.

<sup>4</sup> [Egill fought on Athelstan’s side, and did signal service in the battle at Brunanburi.—Price.]

<sup>5</sup> *Torfeus His. Orcad. Prefat.* “Rei statim ordinem metro nunc satis ob-scuro exposuit.” Torfeus adds, which is much to our purpose, “nequaquam ita narraturus non intelligenti.”

<sup>6</sup> *Crymogr. Arn. Jon.* p. 129, *ut supr.*

manded the scald Loftunga to be put to death, for daring to comprehend his achievements in too concise a poem." "Nemo," said he, "ante te ausus est de me breves cantilenas componere." A curious picture of the tyrant, the patron, and the barbarian, united! But the bard extorted a speedy pardon, and with much address, by producing the next day before the king at dinner an ode of more than thirty strophes, for which Canute gave him fifty marcs of purified silver.<sup>1</sup> In the mean time, the Danish language began to grow perfectly familiar in England. It was eagerly learned by the Saxon clergy and nobility, from a principle of ingratiating themselves with Canute: and there are many manuscripts now remaining, by which it will appear, that the Danish runes were much studied among our Saxon ancestors under the reign of that monarch.<sup>2</sup>

The songs of the Irish bards are by some conceived to be strongly marked with the traces of scaldic imagination; and these traces, which will be reconsidered, are believed still to survive among a species of poetical historians, whom they call Tale-Tellers, supposed to be the descendants of the original Irish bards. [We are informed by the Irish historians, that Saint Patrick, when he converted Ireland to the Christian faith, destroyed three hundred volumes of the songs of the Irish bards. Such was their dignity in this country, that they were permitted to wear a robe of the same colour with that of the royal family. They were constantly summoned to a triennial festival: and the most approved songs delivered at this assembly were ordered to be preserved in the custody of the king's historian or antiquary. Many of these compositions are referred to by Keating, as the foundation of his *History of Ireland*. Ample estates were appropriated to them, that they might live in a condition of independence and ease. The profession was hereditary; but when a bard died, his estate devolved not to his eldest son, but to such of his family as discovered the most distinguished talents for poetry and music. Every principal bard retained thirty of inferior note, as his attendants; and a bard of the secondary class was followed by a retinue of fifteen. They seem to have been at their height in the year 558.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bartholin. *Antiquit. Danic.* lib. i. cap. 10, pp. 169, 170. See *Knyllinga-Saga*, in Catal. Codd. MSS. Bibl. Holm.—Hickes' *Thesaur.* ii. 312.

[Canute's threat—for he did not "command the scald to be put to death"—is thus translated by Mr. Turner: "Are you not ashamed to do what none but yourself has dared, to write a short poem upon me? Unless by to-morrow's dinner you produce above thirty strophes on the same subject, your head shall be the penalty." *Hist. of Anglo-Saxons*, vol. i. p. 437. The result was as Warton states.—Price.]

<sup>2</sup> Hickes, *ubi supr.* i. 134, 136.

<sup>3</sup> See Keating's *History of Ireland*, pp. 127, 132, 370, 380. And Pref. p. 23. None of their poems have been translated. There is an article in the Laws of Kenneth, king of Scotland, promulgated in the year 850, which places the bards of Scotland, who certainly were held in equal esteem with those of the neighbouring countries, in the lowest station. "Fugitivos, bardos, otio addictos, scurras et hujusmodi hominum genus, loris et flagris cedunto." Apud Hector. Boeth. lib. x. p. 201, edit. 1574. But Salmasius very justly observes, that for Bardos we should read Vargos, or Vergos, i. e. Vagabonds.

[Such, said the late ingenious Mr. Walker, was the celebrity of the Irish music, that the Welsh bards condescended to receive instructions in their musical art from those of Ireland. Gryffydd ap Conan, king of North Wales, about the time that Stephen was king of England, determined to reform the Welsh bards, and brought over many Irish bards for that purpose. This Gryffydd, according to the intelligent Mr. Owen, was a distinguished patron of the poets and musicians of his native country, and called several congresses, wherein laws were established for the better regulation of poetry and music, as well as of such as cultivated those sciences. These congresses were open to the people of Wales, as well as of Ireland and Scandinavia, and professors from each country attended: whence what was found peculiar to one people, and worthy of adoption, was received and established in the rest.]

A writer of equal elegance and veracity relates, "that a gentleman of the north of Ireland has told me of his own experience, that in his wolf-huntings there, when he used to be abroad in the mountains three or four days together, and lay very ill a-nights, so as he could not well sleep, they would bring him one of these tale-tellers, that when he lay down would begin a story of a king, or a gyant, a dwarf, and a damosel."<sup>1</sup> These are topics in which the Runic poetry is said to have been greatly conversant.

Nor is it improbable that the Welsh bards might have been acquainted with the Scandinavian scalds. I mean before their communications with Armorica, mentioned at large above. The bards of Britain were originally a constitutional appendage of the Druidical hierarchy. In the parish of Llanidan in the isle of Anglesey there are still to be seen the ruins of an arch-druid's mansion, which they call Trer Drew, that is the Druid's mansion. Near it are marks of the habitations of the separate conventional societies, which were under his immediate orders and inspection. Among these is Trer Beird, or, as they call it to this day, the Hamlet of the bards.<sup>2</sup> But so strong was the attachment of the Celtic nations, among which we reckon Britain, to poetry that, amidst all the changes of government and manners, even long after the order of Druids was extinct and the national religion altered, the bards, acquiring a sort of civil capacity and a new establishment, still continued to flourish. And with regard to Britain, the bards flourished most in those parts of it which most strongly retained their native Celtic character. The Britons living in those countries that were between the Trent or Humber and the Thames, by far the greatest portion of this island, in the midst of the Roman garrisons and colonies, had been so long inured to the customs of the Romans, that they preferred very little of the British; and from this long and habitual intercourse, before the fifth century, they seem to

<sup>1</sup> [Hist. Mem. of Irish Bards, p. 103; Cambr. Biogr. p. 145. Mr. Park's Addition.]

<sup>2</sup> Temple's Essays, part iv. p. 349.

<sup>3</sup> Rowlands' Mona Antiq. 83, 88.

have lost their original language. We cannot discover the slightest trace, in the poems of the bards, the Lives of the British saints, or any other ancient monument, that they held any correspondence with the Welsh, the Cornish, the Cumbrian, or the Strathclyd Britons. Among other British institutions grown obsolete among them, they seem to have lost the use of bards; at least there are no memorials of any they had, nor any of their songs remaining: nor do the Welsh or Cumbrian poets ever touch upon any transactions that passed in those countries, after they were relinquished by the Romans.

And here we see the reason why the Welsh bards flourished so much and so long. But moreover the Welsh, kept in awe as they were by the Romans, harassed by the Saxons, and eternally jealous of the attacks, the encroachments, and the neighbourhood of aliens, were on this account attached to their Celtic manners: this situation and these circumstances inspired them with a pride and an obstinacy for maintaining a national distinction, and for preserving their ancient usages, among which the bardic profession is so eminent. The profanity of the Welsh bards depended much on alliteration. Hence they seem to have paid an attention to the scaldic versification. The Islandic poets are said to have carried alliteration to the highest pitch of exactness in their earliest periods: whereas the Welsh bards of the fifth century used it but sparingly, and in a very imperfect degree. In this circumstance a proof of imitation, at least of emulation, is implied. I am however informed by a very intelligent antiquary in British literature, that there are manifest marks of alliteration in some Druidical fragments still remaining, undoubtedly composed before the Britons could have possibly mixed in the smallest degree with any Gothic nation. Rhyme is likewise found in the British poetry at the earliest period, in those Druidical triplets called Englyn Milwr, or the Warrior's Song, in which every verse is closed with a consonant syllable. There are moreover, strong instances of conformity between the manners of the two nations; which however may be accounted for on general principles arising from our comparative observations on rude life. Yet it is remarkable that mead, the northern nectar, or favourite liquor of the Goths,<sup>2</sup> who seem to have stamped it with the character of a poetical drink, was no less celebrated among the Welsh.<sup>3</sup> The songs of both nations abound with its praises: and it seems in both to have been alike the delight of the warrior and the bard. Talieffin, as Lhuyd informs us, wrote a panegyrical ode on this inspiring beverage of the bee; or, as he translates it, *De Mulso seu Hydromeli.*<sup>4</sup> In Howel Dha's Welsh laws, translated by Wotton, we have, "In omni convivio in quo mulsum bibitur."<sup>5</sup> From which pas-

<sup>1</sup> See a metrical Druid oracle in Borlase's *Antiquit. Cornwall.* B. iii. ch. 5, p. 185, edit. 1769.

<sup>2</sup> And of the ancient Franks. Gregory of Tours mentions a Frank drinking this liquor; and adds, that he acquired this habit from the barbarous or Frankish nations. *Hist. Franc.* lib. viii. c. 33, p. 404, ed. 1699.

<sup>3</sup> See *infra.*

<sup>4</sup> Leg. Wall. l. i. cap. xxiv. p. 45.

<sup>5</sup> Tanner, *Bibl.* p. 706.

sage, it seems to have been served up only at high festivals. By the same constitutions, at every feast in the king's castle-hall, the prefect or marshal of the hall is to receive from the queen, by the hands of the steward, a horn of mead. It is also ordered, among the privileges annexed to the office of prefect of the royal hall, that the king's bard shall sing to him as often as he pleases.<sup>1</sup> One of the stated officers of the king's household is Confectioner Muli: and this officer, together with the master of the horse,<sup>2</sup> the master of the hawks, the smith of the palace,<sup>3</sup> the royal bard, the first musician,<sup>4</sup> with some others, have a right to be<sup>5</sup> seated in the hall. [By these constitutions, given about the year 940, the bard of the Welsh kings is a domestic officer. The king is to allow him a horse and a woollen robe; and the queen a linen garment. The prefect of the palace, or governor of the castle, is privileged to sit next him in the hall on the three principal feast days, and to put the harp into his hand. On the three feast days he is to have the steward's robe for a fee. He is to attend, if the queen desires a song in her chamber. An ox or cow is to be given out of the booty or prey (chiefly consisting of cattle) taken from the English by the king's domestics: and while the prey is dividing, he is to sing the praises of the British kings or kingdom. If, when the king's domestics go out to make depredations, he sings or plays before them, he is to receive the best bullock. When the king's army is in array, he is to sing the song of the British kings. When invested with his office, the king is to give him a harp, (other constitutions say a chess-board,) and the queen a ring of gold: nor is he to give away the harp on any account. When he goes out of the palace to sing with other bards, he is to receive a double portion of the largess or gratuity. If he ask a gift or favour of the king, he is to be fined by singing an

<sup>1</sup> *Leg. Wall.* l. i. cap. xii. p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> When the king makes a present of a horse, this officer is to receive a fee; but not when the present is made to a bishop, the master of the hawks, or to the mimus. The latter is exempt, on account of the entertainment he afforded the court at being presented with a horse by the king: the horse is to be led out of the hall with capistrum testiculis alligatum. *Ibid.* l. i. cap. xvii. p. 31. Mimus seems here to be a mimic, or a gesticulator. Carpenter mentions a "Joculator qui sciebat tombare, to tumble." *Cang. Lat. Gloss. Suppl.* v. Tombare. In the Saxon canons given by King Edgar, about the year 960, it is ordered, that no priest shall be a poet, or exercise the mimical or histrionical art in any degree, either in public or private. Can. 58. *Council. Spelman*, tom. i. p. 455, edit. 1639, fol. In Edgar's Oration to Dunstan, the mimi, minstrels, are said both to sing and dance. *Ibid.* p. 477. Much the same injunction occurs in the Saxon Laws of the Northumbrian priests, given in 988. Cap. xli. *ibid.* p. 498. Mimus seems sometimes to have signified The Fool. As in Gregory of Tours, speaking of the mimus of Miro a king of Gallicia: "Erat enim mimus regis, qui ei per verba jocularia lœtiā erat solitus excitare. Sed non cum adiuvit aliquis cachinnus, neque præstigiis artis sua," &c.—*Gregor. Turonens. Miracul. S. Martin.* lib. iv. cap. vii. p. 1119, Opp. Paris, 1699, fol. edit. Ruinart.

<sup>3</sup> He is to work free: except for making the king's cauldron, the iron bands, and other furniture for his castle-gate, and the iron-work for his mills.—*Leg. Wall.* l. i. cap. xliv. p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> There are two musicians: the Musicus primarius, who probably was a teacher, and certainly a superintendent over the rest; and the Hall-musician.—*Leg. ut supr.* l. i. cap. xlvi. p. 68.

<sup>5</sup> "Jus cathedralæ."—*Ibid.* l. i. cap. x. p. 13.

ode or poem : if of a nobleman or chief, three ; if of a vassal, he is to sing him to sleep.<sup>1</sup> Mention is made of the bard who gains the chair in the hall.<sup>2</sup> After a contest of bards in the hall, the bard who gains the chair, is to give the judge of the hall, another officer, a horn, (*cornu bubalinum*) a ring and the cushion of his chair.<sup>3</sup> When the king rides out of his castle, five bards are to accompany him.<sup>4</sup> The *cornu bubalinum* may be explained from a passage in a poem, composed about the year 1160, by Owain Cyveiliog prince of Powis, which he entitled hirlas, from a large drinking-horn so called, used at feasts in his castle-hall. “ Pour out, O cup-bearer, sweet and pleasant mead (the spear is red in the time of need) from the horns of wild oxen, covered with gold, to the souls of those departed heroes.”<sup>5</sup>

By these laws the king's harp is to be worth one hundred and twenty pence : but that of a gentleman, or one not a vassal, sixty pence. The King's chess-board [Sir F. Madden queries, *draught-board*,] is valued at the same price : and the instrument for fixing or tuning the strings of the king's harp, at twenty-four pence. His drinking-horn at one pound.<sup>6</sup>

We have already seen that the Scandinavian scalds were well known in Ireland : and there is sufficient evidence to prove that the Welsh bards were early connected with the Irish. Even so late as the eleventh century, the practice continued among the Welsh bards, of receiving instructions in the bardic profession from Ireland. The Welsh bards were reformed and regulated by Gryffyth ap Conan, king of Wales, in the year 1078. At the same time, he brought over with him from Ireland many Irish bards, for the information and improvement of the Welsh.<sup>7</sup> Powell acquaints us, that this prince “brought over with him from Ireland divers cunning musicians into Wales, who devised in a manner all the instrumental music that is now there used, as appeareth as well by the booke written of the same, as also by the names of the tunes and meaures used among them to this daie.”<sup>8</sup> In Ireland, to kill a bard was highly criminal : and to seize his estate, even for the public service and in time of national distress, was deemed an act of sacrilege.<sup>9</sup> Thus in the old Welsh laws, whoever even slightly injured a bard, was to be fined six cows and one hundred and twenty pence. The murderer of a bard was to be fined one hundred and twenty-six cows.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Leg. Wall.* l. i. cap. xix. p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid. Artic.* 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* l. i. cap. xvi. p. 26.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* l. i. cap. viii. p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Evans, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* l. iii. cap. vii. p. 265.

<sup>7</sup> See Selden's Note apud Drayt. *Polyolb.* 1613, f. ix. pag. 156 ; f. iv. pag. 67.

<sup>8</sup> *Hift. of Cambr.* 1584, p. 191.

<sup>9</sup> Keating's *Hift. Ireland*, pag. 132.

<sup>10</sup> *Leg. Wall.* *ut supr.* l. i. cap. xix. pag. 35, *seq.* See also cap. xlvi. p. 68. We find the same respect paid to the bard in other constitutions. “ Qui Harpatorem, &c. Whoever shall strike a harper, who can harp in a public assembly, shall compound with him by a composition of *four times more*, than for any other man of the same condition.”—*Legg. Ripuariorum et Wefinorum.* (Lindenbroch. *Cod. LL. Antiq. Wifguth,* &c. A.D. 613, tit. 5, § ult.)

The caliphs and other eastern potentates had their bards, whom they treated with equal respect. Sir John Maundeville, who travelled in 1340, says that when

Nor must I pass over what reflects much light on this reasoning—that the establishment of the household of the old Irish chiefs exactly resembles that of the Welsh kings. For, besides the bard, the musician, and the smith, they have both a physician, a huntsman, and other corresponding officers.<sup>1</sup> We must also remember, that an intercourse was necessarily produced between the Welsh and Scandinavians from the piratical irruptions of the latter: their scalds, as I have already remarked, were respected and patronised in the courts of those princes, whose territories were the principal objects of the Danish invasion. Torfæus expressly affirms this of the Anglo-Saxon and Irish kings; and it is at least probable that they were entertained with equal regard by the Welsh princes, who so frequently concurred with the Danes in distressing the English. It may be added that the Welsh, although living in a separate and detached situation, and so strongly prejudiced in favour of their own usages, yet from neighbourhood and unavoidable communications of various kinds, might have imbibed the ideas of the Scandinavian bards from the Saxons and Danes, after those nations had occupied and overspread all the other parts of our island. Many pieces of the Scotch bards are still remaining in the Highlands of Scotland.<sup>2</sup>

The allusions in the songs of [Macpherson] to spirits, who preside over the different parts and direct the various operations of nature, who send storms over the deep, and rejoice in the shrieks of the ship-wrecked mariner, who call down lightning to blast the forest or cleave the rock, and diffuse irresistible pestilence among the people, beautifully conducted, indeed, and heightened, under the skilful hand of a master bard, entirely correspond with the Runic system, and breathe the spirit of its poetry. One fiction in particular, the most extravagant in all [the *pseudo-Ossianic*] poems, is founded on an

---

the Emperor of Cathay, or great Cham of Tartary, is seated at dinner in high pomp with his lords, “no man is so hardi to speak to him except it be *Musicians to solace the emperor*.”—Chap. lxvii. p. 100. Here is another proof of the correspondence between the eastern and northern customs: and this instance might be brought as an argument of the bardic institution being fetched from the east. Leo Afer mentions the *Poetae curie* of the Caliph’s court at Bagdad, about the year 990.—*De Med. et Philos. Arab.* cap. iv. Those poets were in most repute among the Arabians, who could speak extemporaneous verses to the Caliph.—Euseb. Renaudot, apud Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* xiii. p. 249. Thomson, in the *Castle of Indolence*, mentions the Bard in waiting being introduced to lull the Caliph asleep, and Maundeville mentions “minstrelles” as established officers in the court of the Emperor of Cathay.

<sup>1</sup> See Temple, *ubi supr.* p. 346.

<sup>2</sup> [Here follows, in all the former editions, an elaborate eulogy and description of the Poems of Ossian, now known to have been written by Macpherson. The latter was more successful than Chatterton in imposing on the credulity of our historian, who never heartily believed in the Rowlie fabrications. The *Preliminary Dissertation* appended to Mr. Macgregor’s English version of the Ossianic remains, 1841, 8vo. cannot, I think, be allowed to be conclusive. The extent of its positive showing seems to be to demonstrate, that Macpherson met with certain traditional and oral fragments, with which he dealt as he pleased. This subject is treated at great length, if not exhaustively, by Mr. Campbell (*Popular Tales of the West Highlands*, 1860-2, vol. iv.)]

essential article of the Runic belief. It is where Fingal fights with the spirit of Loda. Nothing could aggrandise Fingal's heroism more highly than this marvellous encounter. It was esteemed among the ancient Danes the most daring act of courage to engage with a ghost.<sup>1</sup> Had [Macpherson] found it convenient to have introduced religion into his compositions, not only a new source had been opened to the sublime, in describing the rites of sacrifice, the horrors of incantation, the solemn evocations of infernal beings, and the like dreadful superstitions, but probably many stronger and more characteristical evidences would have appeared, of his knowledge of the imagery of the Scandinavian poets.

Nor must we forget that the Scandinavians had conquered many countries bordering upon France in the fourth century.<sup>2</sup> Hence the Franks must have been in some measure used to their language, well acquainted with their manners, and conversant in their poetry. Charlemagne is said to have delighted in repeating the most ancient and barbarous odes, which celebrated the battles of ancient kings.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bartholin, *De Contemptu Mortis apud Dan.* l. ii. c. 2, p. 258. And *ibid.* p. 260. There are many other marks of Gothic customs and superstitions in *Ossian*. The fashion of marking the sepulchres of their chiefs with circles of stones corresponds with what Olaus Wormius relates of the Danes.—*Monum. Danic.* Hafn. 1634, p. 38. See also Ol. Magn. *Hist.* xvi. 2. In the *Hervarar Saga*, the sword of Suarfulama is forged by the dwarfs, and called Tirsing.—Hickes, vol. i. p. 193. So Fingal's sword was made by an enchanter, and was called the son of Luno. And, what is more, this Luno was the Vulcan of the north, lived in Juteland, and made complete suits of armour for many of the Scandinavian heroes. See *Temora*, b. vii. p. 159; *Ossian*, vol. ii. edit. 1765. Hence the bards of both countries made him a celebrated enchanter. By the way, the names of sword-smiths were thought worthy to be recorded in history. Hoveden says, that when Geoffrey of Plantagenet was knighted, they brought him a sword from the royal treasure, where it had been laid up from old times, "being the workmanship of Galan, the most excellent of all sword-smiths."—Hoved. f. 444, ii. feft. 50. The mere mechanic, who is only mentioned as a skilful artist in history, becomes a magician or a preternatural being in romance.

[The sword-smith here recorded, is the hero of the Volundar-quitha in Sæmund's *Edda*. He is called Welond in the poem of *Beowulf*; Welond by King Alfred in his translation of Boethius; and Guielandus by Geoffrey of Monmouth. Mr. Ellis affirms that he is also spoken of in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. This has escaped me; but it is to this circumstance, perhaps, that we are indebted for the introduction of his name in the novel of *Kenilworth*.—Price.]

<sup>2</sup> Hickes' *Thes.* i. part ii. p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Eginhart. cap. viii. n. 34, Bartholin. i. chap. x. p. 154. Diodorus Siculus says that the Gauls, who were Celts, delivered the spoils won in battle, yet reeking with blood, to their attendants: these were carried in triumph, while an epinicial song was chanted, *ταντύλωνται οἱ νεκροί τοις θεοῖς*. lib. v. p. 352. See also p. 308. "The Celts," says Aelian, "I hear, are the most enterprising of men: they make those warriors who die bravely in fight the subject of songs, *τὰν Αργεταν*." *Var. Hist.* lib. xxii. c. 23. Posidonius gives us a specimen of the manner of a Celtic bard. He reports that Luerinus, a Celtic chief, was accustomed, out of a desire of popularity, to gather crowds of his people together, and to throw them gold and silver from his chariot. Once he was attended at a sumptuous banquet by one of their bards, who received in reward for his song a purse of gold. On this the bard renewed his song, adding, to express his patron's excessive generosity, this hyperbolical panegyric, "The earth over which his chariot-wheels pass, instantly brings

But we are not informed whether these were Scandinavian, Celtic, or Teutonic poems.

About the beginning of the tenth century, France was invaded by

forth gold and precious gifts to enrich mankind." *Athen.* vi. 184. Tacitus says that Arminius, the conqueror of Varus, "is yet sung among the barbarous nations." That is, probably among the original Germans. *Annal.* ii. And *Mer. Germ.* ii. 3. Joannes Aventinus, a Bavarian, [whose real name was Thurmaift, and] who wrote about the year 1520, has a curious passage: "a great number of verses in praise of the virtues of Attila are still extant among us, *patri sermone more majorum perscripta.*" *Annal. Boior.* l. ii. p. 130, edit. 1627. He immediately adds, "Nam et adhuc vulgo canitur, et est popularibus nostris, eti literarum rudibus, notissimum." Again, speaking of Alexander the Great, he says, "Boios eidem bellum indixisse antiquis canitur carminibus." *Ibid.* lib. i. p. 25. Concerning King Brennus, says the same historian, "Carmina vernacula sermone facta legi in bibliothecis." *Ibid.* lib. i. p. 16, and p. 26. And again, of Ingeram, Adalogerion, and others of their ancient heroes, "Ingerami et Adalogerionis nomina frequentissime in fastis referuntur; ipsos, more majorum, antiquis proavi celebrarunt carminibus, quae in bibliothecis extant. Subsequuntur, quos *patri sermone adhuc canimus, Laertes atque Ulysses.*" *Ibid.* lib. i. p. 15. The same historian also relates that his countrymen had a poetical history called the *Book of Heroes*, containing the achievements of the German warriors. *Ibid.* lib. i. p. 18. See also *Ibid.* lib. vii. p. 432; lib. i. p. 9. And many other passages to this purpose. [The reader who is desirous of further information on this copious subject, may consult *Herr von der Hagen's republication of the Helden-buch*, or his *Grundrisz zur Geschichte der Deutschen Poesie*.—Price.] Suffridus Petrus cites some old Frisian rhymes, *De Orig. Frisior.* l. iii. c. 2. Compare Robertson's *Hist. Charles V.* vol. i. p. 235, edit. 1772. From Trithemius a German abbot and historian, who wrote about 1490, we learn that among the ancient Franks and Germans, it was an exercise in the education of youth, for them to learn to repeat and to sing verses of the achievements of their heroes. *Compend. Annal.* l. i. p. 11, edit. 1601. Probably these were the poems which Charlemagne is said to have committed to memory. The most ancient Theotistic or Teutonic ode I know, is an *Epinicion* published by Schilter, in the second volume of his *Thesaurus Antiquitatum Teutonicarum*, written in the year 883. He entitles it *ENNIKION rhythmo Teutonico Ludovico regi acclamatum cum Northmannus anno DCCCCXXXIII uicisset*. It is in rhyme, and in the four-lined stanza. It was transcribed by Mabillon from a manuscript in the monastery of Saint Amand in Holland. I will give a specimen from Schilter's Latin interpretation, but not on account of the merit of the poetry, "The king seized his shield and lance, galloping hastily. He truly wished to revenge himself on his adversaries. Nor was there a long delay: he found the Normans. He said, Thanks be to God, at seeing what he desired. The king rushed on boldly, he first began the customary song [rather the holy song, ioth frono] *Kyrie elefón*, in which they all joined. The song was sung, the battle began. The blood appeared in the cheeks of the impatient Franks. Every soldier took his revenge, but none like Louis. Impetuous, bold," &c. As to the military chorus *Kyrie elefón*, it appears to have been used by the Christian emperors before an engagement. See *Bona, Rer. Liturg.* ii. c. 4. Vossius, *Theolog. Gentil.* i. c. 2, 3. Matth. Brouerius de Niedek, *De Popular. vet. et recent. Adorationibus*, p. 31. Among the ancient Norwegians, Erlingus Scacchius, before he attacked Earl Sigund, commanded his army to pronounce this formulare aloud, and to strike their shields. See Dolmerus ad *Hird-sraan, sive Jus Aulicum antiqu. Norvegic.* p. 51, p. 43, edit. 1673. Engelhuhius, in describing a battle with the Huns in the year 934, relates that the Christians at the onset cried *Kyrie elefón*, but on the other side, *diabolica vox, hiu, hiu, hiu, auditur.* *Chronic.* p. 1073, in tom. ii. *Scriptor. Bruns. Leibnit.* Compare Bed. *Hist. Eccles. Anglican.* lib. ii. c. 20. And Schilterus, *ubi supr.* p. 17. And Sarbiev. *Od. 1, 24.* The Greek church appears to have had a set of military hymns, probably for the use of the soldiers, either in battle or in the camp. In a Catalogue of the manuscripts of the library of Berne, there is "Sylloge Tacticorum Leonis Imperatoris cui operi

the Northern-men, an army of adventurers from Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. And although the conquerors, especially when their success does not solely depend on superiority of numbers, usually assume the manners of the conquered, yet these strangers must have still further familiarized in France many of their northern fictions.

From this general circulation in these and other countries, and from that popularity which it is natural to suppose they must have acquired, the scaldic inventions might have taken deep root in Europe.<sup>1</sup> At least they seem to have prepared the way for the more easy admission of the Arabian fabling about the ninth century, by which they were, however, in great measure superseded. The Arabian fictions were of a more splendid nature, and better adapted to the increasing civility of the times. Less horrible and gross, they had a novelty, a variety, and a magnificence, which carried with them the charm of fascination. Yet it is probable that many of the scaldic imaginations might have been blended with the Arabian. In the meantime, there is great reason to believe that the Gothic scalds enriched their vein of fabling from this new and fruitful source of fiction, opened by the Arabians in Spain, and afterwards propagated by the crusades. It was in many respects congenial with their own:<sup>2</sup> and the northern

finem imponunt Hymni Militares quibus iste titulus, Ακολούθα φαλαρίστα ἦν κατισθάνειν  
καὶ σημαχία στράτου, " &c. Catal. Cod. &c. p. 600. See Meursius' edit. of Leo's *Tatrics*, 1612, c. xii. p. 155. But to return to the main subject of this tedious note. Wagenseil, in a letter to Cuperus, mentions a treatise written by one Ernest Casimir Wallenback, I suppose a German, with this title, *De Bardis ac Barditu, sive antiquis Carminibus ac Cantilenis veterum Germanorum Dissertatio*, cui junctus est de S. Annone Colonensi archiepiscopo vetustissimus omnium Germanorum rhythmus et monumentum. See Polen. *Suppl. Thesaur. Gronov. et Græv.* tom. iv. p. 24. I do not think it was ever published. See Joach. Swabius, *de Semnotheis veterum Germanorum philosophia*, p. 8. And sect. i. *infr.* p. 8. Pelloutier, *sur la Lang. Celt.* part i. tom. i. ch. xii. p. 20. [Mr. Warton in this note refers to Vossius; but that author does not speak of the Kyrie eleison as a war-cry, but merely as a common invocation to the Deity among the Christians.—*Douce*. But Warton is perfectly correct as to the fact, though he may have misquoted his authority: "Kyrie eleison cantantes more fidelium militum properantur ad bellum, saliendo ingressi sunt Rhenum."—*Mirac. S. Verene*, tom. i. Sept. p. 170, col. 2. Carpenter in *voce* Bede records a similar practice. "Tunc subito Germanos signifer universos admonet et prædicat, ut voci suæ uno clamore respondeant securisque hostibus qui se insperatos adesse confiderent Alleluia tertio repetitum Sacerdotes exclamabant. Sequitur una vox omnium et elatum clamorem repercuo aere montium conclusi multiplicant," &c. Beda, lib. i. *Eccl. Hist. Angl.* cap. xx. But see Schilter's notes to his *Epistola*, v. 94; where other authorities are cited.—*Price.*] We must be careful to distinguish between the poetry of the Scandinavians, the Teutonics, and the Celts. As most of the Celtic and Teutonic nations were early converted to Christianity, it is hard to find any of their native songs, [unless we may except the ancient fragments, on which Macpherson is conjectured to have built his ingenious fabric.]

<sup>1</sup> Of the long continuance of the Celtic superstitions in the popular belief, see what is said in Mrs. Montague's *Essay on Shakespeare*, p. 145, edit. 1772.

<sup>2</sup> Besides the general wildness of the imagery in both, among other particular circumstances of coincidence which might be mentioned here, the practice of giving names to swords, which we find in the scaldic poems, occurs also among the Ara-

bards, who visited the countries where these new fancies were spreading, must have been naturally struck with such wonders, and were certainly fond of picking up fresh embellishments and new strokes of the marvellous for augmenting and improving their stock of poetry. The earliest scald now on record is not before the year 750. From which time the scalds flourished in the northern countries till below the year 1157.<sup>1</sup> The celebrated ode of Regner Lodbrog was composed about the end of the ninth century.<sup>2</sup>

That this hypothesis is partly true, may be concluded from the subjects of some of the old Scaldic romances, manuscripts of which now remain in the royal library at Stockholm. The titles of a few shall serve for a specimen; which I will make no apology for giving at large: *Sagan af Hialmter oc Olwer, The History of Hialmter king of Sweden, son of a Syrian princess, and of Oliver Jarl. Containing their expeditions into Hunland and Arabia, with their numerous encounters with the Vikings and the giants. Also their leagues with Alsola, daughter of Ringer king of Arabia, afterwards married to Hervor king of Hunland, &c.* (ii.) *Sagan af Siod. The History of Siod, son of Ridgare king of England; who first was made king of England, afterwards of Babylon and Nineveh. Comprehending various occurrences in Saxland, Babylon, Greece, Africa, and especially in Eirice<sup>3</sup> the region of the giants.* (iii.) *Sagan af Alefleck. The History of Alefleck, a king of England, and of his expeditions into India and Tartary.* (iv.) *Sagan af Erik Widforla. The History of Eric the traveller who, with his companion Eric, a Danish Prince, undertook a wonderful journey to Odin's Hall, or Oden's Aker, near the river Pison in India.*<sup>4</sup>

bians. In the *Hervarar Saga*, the sword of Suarfulama is called *Tirfing*. Hickes' *Thes.* i. p. 193. The names of swords of many of the old northern chiefs are given us by Olaus Wormius, *Lit. Run.* cap. xix. p. 110, 4to edit. Thus, Herbelot recites a long catalogue of the names of the swords of the most famous Arabian and Peric warriors. V. Saif. p. 736, b. Mahomet had nine swords, all of which are named. As were also his bows, quivers, cuirasses, helmets, and lances. His swords were called The Piercing, Ruin, Death, &c. *Mod. Univ. Hist.* i. p. 253. This is common in the romance-writers and Ariosto. Mahomet's horses had also pompous or heroic appellations. Such as the Swift, the Thunderer, Shaking the earth with his hoof, the Red, &c. As likewise his mules, asses, and camels. Horses were named in this manner among the Runic heroes. See Ol. Worm. *ut supr.* p. 110. Odin's horse was called *Sleipner*. See *Edda Island.* fab. xxi. I could give other proofs. But we have already wandered too far, in what Spenser calls "this delightful lone of Faerie." Yet I must add, that from one or both of these sources, King Arthur's sword is named in Geoffrey of Monmouth, lib. ix. cap. 11. Ron is also the name of his lance. *Ibid.* cap. 4. And Turpin calls Charlemagne's sword *Gaudiosa*. See *Obs. Spens.* i. sect. vi. p. 214. By the way, from these correspondences an argument might be drawn, to prove the oriental origin of the Goths. And some perhaps may think them proofs of the doctrine just now suggested in the text, that the scalds borrowed from the Arabians. [See a very curious description of Gaileon's sword *Duransard* in the romance of *La plaisante et délectable Histoire de Gerileon d'Angleterre*, Paris, 1572, p. 47. A sword of a most enormous size is related by Froissart to have been used by Archibald Douglas. See lib. ii. c. 10.—*Douce*. See also Taylor's *Glory of Regality*, p. 71.—*Price.*]

<sup>1</sup> Ol. Worm. *Lit. Run.* p. 241.

<sup>2</sup> Id. *Ibid.* p. 196. *Vid. infra.*

<sup>3</sup> In the Latin *Eiricea regione*, f. Erse or Irish land.

<sup>4</sup> Wanley *apud* Hickes, iii. p. 314, seq.

Here we see the circle of the Icelandic poetry enlarged; and the names of countries and cities belonging to another quarter of the globe, Arabia, India, Tartary, Syria, Greece, Babylon, and Nineveh, intermixed with those of Hunland, Sweden, and England, and adopted into the northern romantic narratives. Even Charlemagne and Arthur, whose histories, as we have already seen, had been so lavishly decorated by the Arabian fablers, did not escape the Scandinavian scalds.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly we find these subjects among their Sagas: *Sagan af Erik Einglands Kappe. The History of Erik, son of king Hiac, king Arthur's chief wrestler. Historical rhymes of king Arthur, containing his league with Charlemagne.* (ii.) *Sagan af Ivent. The History of Ivent, king Arthur's principal champion, containing his battles with the giants.*<sup>2</sup> (iii.) *Sagan af Karlamagnuse of hoppum hans. The History of Charlemagne, of his champions and captains.* Containing all his actions in several parts. 1. Of his birth and coronation: and the combat of Carvetus king of Babylon, with Oddegir the Dane.<sup>3</sup> 2. Of Aglandus king of Africa, and of his son Jatmund, and their wars in Spain with Charlemagne. 3. Of Roland, and his combat with Villaline king of Spain. 4. Of Otuel's conversion to Christianity, and his marriage with Charlemagne's daughter. 5. Of Hugh king of Constantinople, and the memorable exploits of his champions. 6. Of the wars of Ferracute king of Spain. 7. Of

<sup>1</sup> It is amazing how early and how universally this fable was spread. G. de la Flamma says that in the year 1339 an ancient tomb of a king of the Lombards was broken up in Italy. On his sword was written, "C'el est l'espée de Meier Trifant, un qui occit l'Amoroyt d'Yrlant."—i. e. "This is the sword of Sir Trifram, who killed Amoroyt of Ireland." *Script. Ital.* tom. xii. 1028. The Germans are said to have some very ancient narrative songs on our old British heroes, Trifram, Gawain, and the rest of the knights Von der Tafel-ronde. See Goldast. *Nat. Vit. Carol. Magn.* p. 207, edit. 1711.

<sup>2</sup> They have also *Bretomanna Saga, The History of the Britons, from Eneas the Trojan to the emperor Constantius*, Wanl. *ibid.* There are many others, perhaps of later date, relating to English history, particularly the history of William the Bastard and other Christians, in their expedition into the holy land. The history of the destruction of the monasteries in England, by William Rufus. Wanl. *ibid.* [It will perhaps be superfluous to remark, that all the Sagas mentioned in the text are the production of an age long subsequent to the reign of William Rufus.—Price.] In the history of the library at Upial, I find the following articles, which are left to the conjectures of the curious enquirer. *Historia Biblioth. Upfaliens*, per Celsius. 1745, p. 88, Artic. vii. *Variae Britannorum fabulae, quas in carmine convertas olim, atque in conviviis ad citharam decantari solitas fuisse, perhibent. Sunt autem relationes de Guimaro equite Britanniae meridionalis Aeskelioid Britannis veteribus dictae. De Nobilium duorum conjugibus gemellos enixis; et ejus gener. alia*—p. 87. [This is the Icelandic version of the *Fables* of Marie de France already mentioned.] Artic. v. *Drama sporum* fol. in membran. *Res continet amatarias olim ad jocum concitandum Islandica lingua scriptum.*—*Ibid.* Artic. vii. The history of Duke Julianus, son of S. Giles. Containing many things of Earl William and Rosamund. In the ancient Icelandic. See *Observations on the Fairy Queen*, i. pp. 203, 204, sect. vi.

<sup>3</sup> Mabillon thinks that Turpin first called this hero a Dane. But this notion is refuted by Bartholinus, *Antiq. Danic.* ii. 13, p. 578. His old Gothic sword, Spatha, and iron shield, are still preserved and shown in a monastery of the north. Bartholin. *ibid.* p. 579.

Charlemagne's achievements in Rouncevalles, and of his death."<sup>1</sup> In another of the Sagas, *Jarl*, a magician of Saxland, exhibits his feats of necromancy before Charlemagne. We learn from Olaus Magnus, that Roland's magical horn, of which Archbishop Turpin relates such wonders, and among others that it might be heard at the distance of twenty miles, was frequently celebrated in the songs of the Icelandic bards.<sup>2</sup> It is not likely that these pieces, to say no more, were composed till the Scandinavian tribes had been converted to Christianity; that is, about the [twelfth] century. These barbarians had an infinite and a national contempt for the Christians, whose religion inculcated a spirit of peace, gentleness and civility; qualities so dissimilar to those of their own ferocious and warlike disposition, and which they naturally interpreted to be the marks of cowardice and pusillanimity.<sup>3</sup> It has, however, been urged, that as the irruption of the Normans into France, under their leader Rollo, did not take place till towards the beginning of the tenth century, at which period the scaldic art was arrived to the highest perfection in Rollo's native country, we can easily trace the descent of the French and English romances of chivalry from the Northern Sagas. It is supposed that Rollo carried with him many scalds from the north, who transmitted their skill to their children and successors: and that these, adopting the religion, opinions, and language of the new country, substituted the heroes of Christendom for those of their pagan ancestors, and began to celebrate the feats of Charlemagne, Roland, and Oliver, whose true history they set off and embellished with the scaldic figments of dwarfs, giants, dragons, and enchantments.<sup>4</sup> There is, however, some reason to believe that these fictions were current among the French long before; and, if the principles advanced in the former part of this dissertation be true, the fables adhering to Charlemagne's real history must be referred to another source.

Let me add, that the enchantments of the Runic poetry are very different from those in our romances of chivalry. The former chiefly deals in spells and charms, such as would preserve from poison, blunt the weapons of an enemy, procure victory, allay a tempest, cure bodily diseases, or call the dead from their tombs: in uttering a form of mysterious words or inscribing Runic characters. The magicians of romance are chiefly employed in forming and conduct-

<sup>1</sup> Wanley, *ut supr.* p. 314.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra*. sect. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Regner Lodbrog, in his Dying Ode, speaking of a battle fought against the Christians, says, in ridicule of the eucharist, "There we celebrated a Mass [Miflu, *Island.*] of weapons." [As the narrative of this ode is couched in the first person, it was for a long time considered to be Regner's own production. A more sober spirit of criticism afterwards referred it to Bragi hinn gamall, who was said to have written it at the request of Aslaug, Lodbrog's widow. But Erichsen, the learned and judicious editor of the *Royal Mirror* and *Gunlaug Ormsunga Saga*, selected this very expression (odda miflu) as a proof of its later origin, and of the author being a Christian. It is now usually assigned to the close of the eleventh or beginning of the twelfth century.—Price.]

<sup>4</sup> Percy's *Epf. Metr. Rom.* p. viii.

ing a train of deceptions. There is an air of barbaric horror in the incantations of the scaldic fablers: the magicians of romance often present visions of pleasure and delight; and, although not without their alarming terrors, sometimes lead us through flowery forests, and raise up palaces glittering with gold and precious stones. The Runic magic is more like that of Canidia in Horace, the romantic resembles that of Armida in Tasso. The operations of the one are frequently but mere tricks, in comparison of that sublime solemnity of necromantic machinery which the other so awfully displays.

It is also remarkable, that in the earlier scaldic odes we find [no] fairies. These were introduced afterwards, and are the progeny of Arabian fancy.<sup>1</sup> Nor indeed do these imaginary beings often occur in any of the compositions which preceded the introduction of that species of fabling. On this reasoning, the Irish tale-teller mentioned above could not be a lineal descendant of the elder Irish bards. It has already been suggested, at what period and from what origin those fancies got footing in the Welsh poetry: we do not find them in the odes of Talieffin or Aneurin, who flourished about the year 570. He has left a long spirited poem called *Gododin*, often alluded to by the latter Welsh bards, which celebrates a battle fought against the Saxons near Cattraeth, under the conduct of Mynnydawe Eiddin, in which all the Britons, three only excepted, among which was the bard Aneurin himself, were slain. I will give a specimen. “The men whose drink was mead, comely in shape, hastened to Cattraeth. These impetuous warriors in ranks, armed with red spears, long and bending, began the battle. Might I speak my revenge against the people of the Deiri, I would overwhelm them, like a deluge, in one slaughter: for unheeding I have lost a friend, who was brave in resisting his enemies. I drank of the wine and metheglin of Mordai, whose spear was of huge size. In the shock of the battle, he prepared food for the eagle. When Cydwal hastened forward, a shout arose: before the yellow morning, when he gave the signal, he broke the shield into small splinters. The men hastened to Cattraeth, noble in birth: their drink was wine and mead out of golden cups. There were three hundred and sixty-three adorned with chains of gold; but of those who, filled with wine, rushed on to the fight, only three escaped, who hewed their way with the sword, the warrior of Acron, Conan Dacarawd, and I the bard Aneurin, red with blood, otherwife I should not have survived to compose this song. When Caradoc hastened to the war, he was the son of a wild boar, in hewing down the Saxons; a bull in the conflict of fight, he twisted the [spear] from their hands. Gurien saw not his father after he had lifted the glistening mead in his hand. I praise all the warriors who thus met in the battle, and attacked the foe

<sup>1</sup> [This is again a very wrong notion of Warton's of the western fairies being derived from the Arabs. They are simply the elves of the Teutonic and Scandinavian mythology, modified by the changes in social condition and feeling. The name fairy (*fay*) is of course French.—Wright.]

with one mind. Their life was short, but they have left a long regret to their friends. Yet of the Saxons they slew more than seven. . . . . There was many a mother shedding tears. The song is due to thee who hast attained the highest glory: thou who wait like fire, thunder and storm: O Rudd Fedell, warlike champion, excellent in might, you still think of the war. The noble chiefs deserve to be celebrated in verse, who after the fight made the rivers to overflow their banks with blood. Their hands glutted the throats of the dark-brown eagles, and skilfully prepared food for the ravenous birds. Of all the chiefs who went to Cattraeth with golden chains," &c. This poem is extremely difficult to be understood, being written, if not in the Pictish language, at least in a dialect of the Britons very different from the modern Welsh.<sup>1</sup> This reasoning explains an observation of an ingenious critic in this species of literature, and who has studied the works of the Welsh bards with much attention. "There are not such extravagant flights in any poetic compositions, except it be in the eastern; to which, as far as I can judge by the few translated specimens I have seen, they bear a near resemblance."<sup>2</sup> I will venture to say he does not meet with these flights in the elder Welsh bards. The beautiful romantic fiction that King Arthur, after being wounded in the fatal battle of Camlan, was conveyed by an Elfin princess into the land of Faery or spirits, to be healed of his wounds, that he reigns there still as a mighty potentate in all his pristine splendour, and will one day return to resume his throne in Britain, and restore the solemnities of his champions, often occurs in the ancient Welsh bards.<sup>3</sup> But not in the most ancient. It is found in the compositions of the Welsh bards only, who flourished after the native vein of British fabling had been tinctured by these fairy tales, which [had been] propagated in Armorica, and which the Welsh had received from their connexion with that province of Gaul. Such a fiction as this is entirely different from the cast and complexion of the ideas of the original Welsh poets. It is easy to collect from the Welsh odes, written after the tenth century, many signatures of this exotic imagery. Such as, "Their assault was like strong lions. He is as valorous as a lion, who can resist his lance? The dragon of

<sup>1</sup> See the learned and ingenious Mr. Evans' *Dissertatio de Bardis*, pp. 68—75.

<sup>2</sup> Evans, *ubi supr. Pref.* p. iv.

<sup>3</sup> The Arabians call the Fairies Ginn, and the Persians Peri. The former call Fairy-land, Ginnistian, many beautiful cities of which they have described in their fabulous histories. See Herbelot,—*Bibl. Orient. Gian.* p. 306, a, *Gens.* p. 375, a. *Peri.* p. 701, b. They pretend that the fairies built the city of Esthekar, or Persepolis. *Id. in v.* p. 327, a. One of the most eminent of the Oriental fairies was Mergian Peri, or Mergian the Fairy. Herbel. *ut supr. v.* Peri, p. 702, a. *Thahamurath,* p. 1017, a. This was a good fairy, and imprisoned for ages in a cavern by the giant Demrusch, from which she was delivered by Thahamurath, whom she afterwards assisted in conquering another giant, his enemy. *Id. ibid.* And this is the fairy or elfin queen, called in the French romances Morgan le Fay, Morgan the fairy, who preserved King Arthur. See *Obs. on the Fairy Queen*, i. 63, 65, section ii.

Mona's sons was so brave in fight, that there was horrible consternation, and upon Tal Moelvre a thousand banners. Our lion has brought to Trallwng three armies. A dragon, he was from the beginning unterrified in battle. A dragon of Ovain. Thou art a prince firm in battle, like an elephant. Their assault was as of strong lions. The lion of Cemais fierce in the onset, when the army rusheth to be covered with red. He saw Llewellyn like a burning dragon in the strife of Arson. He is furious in fight like an outrageous dragon. Like the roaring of a furious lion, in the search of prey, is thy thirst of praise." Instead of producing more proofs from the multitude that might be mentioned, for the sake of illustration of our argument, I will contrast these with some of their natural unadulterated thoughts. "Fetch the drinking-horn, whose gloo is like the wave of the sea. Tudor is like a wolf rushing on his prey. They were all covered with blood when they returned, and the high hills and dales enjoyed the sun equally.<sup>1</sup> O thou virgin, that shonest like the snow on the brows of Aran:<sup>2</sup> like the fine spiders' webs on the grass on a summer's day. The army at Offa's dyke panted for glory, the soldiers of Venedotia, and the men of London, were as the alternate motion of the waves on the seashore, where the sea-mew screams. The hovering crows were numberless: the ravens croaked, they were ready to suck the prostrate carcases. His enemies are scattered as leaves on the side of hills driven by hurricanes. He is a warrior like a surge on the beach that covers the wild salmons. Her eye was piercing like that of the hawk:<sup>3</sup> her face shone like the pearly dew on Eryri.<sup>4</sup> Llewellyn is a hero who setteth castles on fire. I have watched all night on the beach, where the sea-gulls, whose plumes glitter, sport on the bed of billows; and where the herbage, growing in a solitary place, is of a deep green.<sup>5</sup> These images are all drawn from their own country, from their situation and circumstances, and although highly poetical, are in general of a more sober and temperate colouring. In a word, not only that elevation of allusion, which many suppose to be peculiar to the poetry of Wales, but that fertility of fiction, and those marvellous fables recorded in Geoffrey of Monmouth, which the generality of readers, who do not sufficiently attend to the origin of that historian's romantic materials, believe to be the genuine offspring of the Welsh poets, are of foreign growth. To return to the ground of this argument, there is the strongest reason to suspect, that even the Gothic Edda, or system of poetic mythology of the northern nations, is enriched with those higher strokes of oriental imagination, which the Arabians had communi-

<sup>1</sup> A beautiful periphrasis for noonday, and extremely natural in so mountainous a country as Wales. This circumstance of time added to the merit of the action.

<sup>2</sup> The high mountains in Merionethshire.

<sup>3</sup> See *inf.* sect. xiii.

<sup>4</sup> Mountains of snow, from Eiry, snow,

<sup>5</sup> See Evans, *ubi supr.* pp. 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, 34, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42. And his *Diss. de Bard.* p. 84. Compare Aneurin's ode, cited above.

cated to the Europeans. With this extravagant tissue of unmeaning allegory, false philosophy and false theology it was easy to incorporate their most wild and romantic conceptions.<sup>1</sup>

It must be confessed that the ideas of chivalry, the appendage and the subject of romance, subsisted among the Goths. But this must be understood under certain limitations. There is no peculiarity which more strongly discriminates the manners of the Greeks and Romans from those of modern times than that small degree of attention and respect with which those nations treated the fair sex, and that inconsiderable share which they were permitted to take in conversation and the general commerce of life. For the truth of this observation we need only appeal to the classic writers, in whom their women appear to have been devoted to a state of seclusion and obscurity. One is surprised that barbarians should be greater masters of complaisance than the most polished people that ever existed. No sooner was the Roman empire overthrown, and the Goths had overpowered Europe, than we find the female character assuming an unusual importance and authority, and distinguished with new privileges, in all the European governments established by the northern conquerors. Even amidst the confusions of savage war and among the almost incredible enormities committed by the Goths at their invasion of the empire, they forbore to offer any violence to the women. This perhaps is one of the most striking features in the new state of manners, which took place about the seventh century: and it is to this period and to this

<sup>1</sup> Huet is of opinion that the *Edda* is entirely the production of Snorro's fancy. But this is saying too much. See *Orig. Roman.* p. 116. The first *Edda* was compiled undoubtedly with many additions and interpolations, from fictions and traditions in the old Runic poems, by Sæmund Sigfusson, surnamed the [Sage] about the year 1057. He seems to have made it his business to select or digest into one body such of these pieces as were best calculated to furnish a collection of poetic phrases and figures. He studied in Germany, and chiefly at Cologne. This first *Edda* being not only prolix, but perplexed and obscure, a second, which is that now extant, was compiled by Snorro Sturlefon, born in the year 1179. [This has been copied from Mallet, who seems only to have seen the *Edda* of Snorro as published by Resenius. The *Edda* of Sæmund has since been published at Copenhagen by the Arne-Magnæan Commission. The labours of Sæmund were confined to collecting the mythological and historical songs of his country, which he probably prefaced and interspersed with a few remarks in prose; those of Snorro, to reducing the same or a similar collection into a more intelligible and connected prose narrative. The object of Sæmund appears to have been the formation of a poetic Anthology, rather than a regular series of mythic and historic documents; that of Snorro, to offer a general outline of the Northern mythology. Erasmus Müller, in his tract *Ueber die Aſalehre*, has successfully vindicated Snorro from the charge of palming upon the world his own inventions as the religious code of the North. It should however be remarked, that tradition alone or very recent manuscripts attribute the formation of the first collection to Sæmund. This does not rest on certain testimony.—Price.] It is certain, and very observable, that in the *Edda* we find much more of giants, dragons and other imaginary beings, undoubtedly belonging to Arabian romance, than in the earlier Scaldic odes. By the way, there are many strokes in both the *Eddas* taken from the *Revelations of Saint John*, which must [have] come from the compilers, who were Christians.

people, that we must refer the origin of gallantry in Europe. The Romans never introduced these sentiments into their European provinces.

The Goths believed some divine and prophetic quality to be inherent in their women; they admitted them into their councils, and consulted them on the public business of the state. They were suffered to conduct the great events which they predicted. Ganna, a prophetic virgin of the Marcomanni, a German or Gaulish tribe, was sent by her nation to Rome, and admitted into the presence of Domitian, to treat concerning terms of peace.<sup>1</sup> Tacitus relates that Velleda, another German prophetess, held frequent conferences with the Roman generals; and that on some occasions, on account of the sacredness of her person, she was placed at a great distance on a high tower, whence, like an oracular divinity, she conveyed her answers by some chosen messenger.<sup>2</sup> She appears to have preserved the supreme rule over her own people and the neighbouring tribes.<sup>3</sup> And there are other instances, that the government among the ancient Germans was sometimes vested in the women.<sup>4</sup> This practice also prevailed among the Sitones or Norwegians.<sup>5</sup> The Cimbri, a Scandinavian tribe, were accompanied at their assemblies by venerable and hoary-headed prophetesses, appareled in long linen vestments of a splendid white.<sup>6</sup> Their matrons and daughters acquired a reverence from their skill in studying simples and their knowledge of healing wounds, arts reputed mysterious. The wives frequently attended their husbands in the most perilous expeditions, and fought with great intrepidity in the most bloody engagements.<sup>7</sup> These nations dreaded captivity, more on the account of their women, than on their own: and the Romans, availing themselves of this apprehension, often demanded their noblest virgins for hostages.<sup>8</sup> From these circumstances, the women even claimed a sort of precedence; at least an equality subsisted between the sexes in the Gothic constitutions.

But the deference paid to the fair sex, which produced the spirit of gallantry, is chiefly to be sought for in those strong and exaggerated ideas of female chastity which prevailed among the northern

<sup>1</sup> *Dio.* lib. lxvii. p. 761.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist.* lib. iv. p. 953, edit. D'Orlean.

<sup>3</sup> He says just before, "ea virgo late imperitabat." *Ibid.* p. 951. He saw her in the reign of Vespasian. *De Morib. German.* p. 972. Where he likewise mentions Aurinia.

<sup>4</sup> See Tacit. *Hist.* lib. v. p. 969, *ut supr.*

<sup>5</sup> *De Morib. German.* p. 983, *ut supr.*

<sup>6</sup> Strab. *Geograph.* lib. viii. p. 205, edit. 1587. Compare Keyser, *Antiquit. Sel. Septentrional.* p. 371, viz. *Dissertatio de Mulieribus Fatidicis veterum Celtaarum genitiumque Septentrionalium.* See also Cluverius's *Germania Antiqua*, lib. i. cap. xxiv. pag. 165, edit. 1631. It were easy to trace the Weird sisters and our modern witches to this source.

<sup>7</sup> See sect. vii. *infr.* Diodorus Siculus says, that among the Scythians the women are trained to war as well as the men, to whom they are not inferior in strength and courage. L. ii. p. 90.

<sup>8</sup> Tacit. *de Morib. Germ.* pag. 972, *ut supr.*

nations. Hence the lover's devotion to his mistress was increased, his attentions to her service multiplied, his affection heightened, and his solicitude aggravated, in proportion as the difficulty of obtaining her was enhanced: and the passion of love acquired a degree of delicacy, when controlled by the principles of honour and purity. The highest excellence of character then known was a superiority in arms; and that rival was most likely to gain his lady's regard, who was the bravest champion. Here we see valour inspired by love. In the meantime, the same heroic spirit which was the surest claim to the favour of the ladies, was often exerted in their protection: a protection much wanted in an age of rapine, plunder and piracy, when the weakness of the softer sex was exposed to continual dangers and unexpected attacks. It is easy to suppose the officious emulation and ardour of many a gallant young warrior, pressing forward to be foremost in this honourable service, which flattered the most agreeable of all passions, and which gratified every enthusiasm of the times, especially the fashionable fondness for a wandering and military life. In the meantime, we may conceive the lady thus won or thus defended, conscious of her own importance, affecting an air of stateliness: it was her pride to have preserved her chastity inviolate, she could perceive no merit but that of invincible bravery, and could only be approached in terms of respect and sub-mission.

Among the Scandinavians, a people so fond of clothing adventures in verse, these gallantries must naturally become the subject of poetry with its fictitious embellishments. Accordingly, we find their chivalry displayed in their odes; pieces, which at the same time greatly confirm these observations. The famous ode of *Regner Lodbrog* affords a striking instance; in which, being imprisoned in a loathsome dungeon, and condemned to be destroyed by venomous serpents, he solaces his desperate situation by recollecting and reciting the glorious exploits of his past life. One of these, and the first which he commemorates, was an achievement of chivalry. It was the delivery of a beautiful Swedish princess from an impregnable fortress, in which she was forcibly detained by one of her father's captains. Her father issued a proclamation, promising that whoever would rescue the lady should have her in marriage. Regner succeeded in the attempt, and married the fair captive. This was about the year 860.<sup>1</sup> There are other strokes in Regner's ode, which, although not belonging to this particular story, deserve to be pointed out here, as illustrative of our argument. Such as, "It was [not<sup>2</sup>] like being placed near a beautiful virgin on a couch.—It was [not<sup>2</sup>] like kissing a young widow in the first seat at a feast.

<sup>1</sup> See *Torf. Hiflor. Norw.* tom. i. lib. 10, *Saxo Grammat.* p. 152. And *Ol. Worm. Lit. Run.* p. 221, edit. 46. I suspect that the romantic amour between Regner and Aslauga is the forgery of a much later age. See *Regnara Lodbrog's Saga*, C. 5, apud *Biorneri Hiflor. Reg. Her. et Pugil. Res præclar. gesæt.* Stockholm, 1737.

<sup>2</sup> [The original in both passages reads: *Verat sem*—It was not like.—*Price.*]

I made to struggle in the twilight<sup>1</sup> that golden-haired chief, who passed his mornings among the young maidens, and loved to converse with widows. He who aspires to the love of young virgins, ought always to be foremost in the din of arms."<sup>2</sup> It is worthy of remark, that these sentiments occur to Regner while he is in the midst of his tortures, and at the point of death. Thus many of the heroes in Froissart, in the greatest extremities of danger, recollect their amours, and die thinking of their mistresses. And by the way, in the same strain, Boh, a Danish champion, having lost his chin and one of his cheeks by a single stroke from Thurstain Midlang, only reflected how he should be received, when thus maimed and disfigured, by the Danish girls. He instantly exclaimed in a tone of savage gallantry, "The Danish virgins will not now willingly or easily give me kisses, if I should perhaps return home."<sup>3</sup> But there is an ode, in the *Knytlinga-Saga*, written by Harald the valiant, which is professedly a song of chivalry; and which, exclusive of its wild spirit of adventure and its images of savage life, has the romantic air of a set of stanzas composed by a Provençal troubadour. Harald appears to have been one of the most eminent adventurers of his age. He had killed the king of Drontheim in a bloody engagement. He had traversed all the seas, and visited all the coasts, of the north, and had carried his piratical enterprises even as far as the Mediterranean and the shores of Africa. He was at length taken prisoner, and detained for some time at Constantinople. He complains in this ode, that the reputation he had acquired by so many hazardous exploits, by his skill in single combat, riding, swimming, gliding along the ice, darting, rowing, and guiding a ship through the rocks, had not been able to make any impression on Elissif or Elizabeth, the beautiful daughter of Jarilas, king of Russia.<sup>4</sup>

Here, however, chivalry subsisted but in its rudiments. Under the feudal establishments, which were soon afterwards erected in Europe, it received new vigour, and was invested with the formalities of a regular institution. The nature and circumstances of that peculiar model of government were highly favourable to this strange spirit of fantastic heroism which, however unmeaning and ridiculous

<sup>1</sup> [Dr. Percy has it, "in the twilight of death," which adds greatly to the sublimity of the passage. See the second of *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, 1763.—*Park*.]

Unhappily the Icelandic text makes no mention of the "twilight."

" Hár-fagran sá ek hraukva,  
Meyar-dreng at morgni,  
Oc mál-vin eckio,  
I saw retire the fair haired  
Maids-lad at morning,  
And soft-speaker of (the) widow."

The person alluded to was Aurn, a prince of the Hebrides.—*Price.*]

<sup>2</sup> St. 13, 14, 19, 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Chron. Norveg.* p. 136.

<sup>4</sup> *Bartholin*, p. 54.

it may seem, had the most serious and salutary consequences in affixing the general growth of refinement and the progression of civilization, in forming the manners of Europe, in inculcating the principles of honour, and in teaching modes of decorum. The genius of the feudal policy was perfectly martial. A numerous nobility, formed into separate principalities, affecting independence, and mutually jealous of their privileges and honours, necessarily lived in a state of hostility. This situation rendered personal strength and courage the most requisite and essential accomplishments, and hence, even in time of peace, they had no conception of any diversions or public ceremonies but such as were of the military kind. Yet, as the courts of these petty princes were thronged with ladies of the most eminent distinction and quality, the ruling passion for war was tempered with courtesy. The prize of contending champions was adjudged by the ladies, who did not think it inconsistent to be present or to preside at the bloody spectacles of the times; and who themselves seem to have contracted an unnatural and unbecoming ferocity, while they softened the manners of those valorous knights who fought for their approbation. The high notions of a noble descent, which arose from the condition of the feudal constitution and the ambition of forming an alliance with powerful and opulent families, cherished this romantic system. It was hard to obtain the fair feudatory, who was the object of universal adoration. Not only the splendour of birth, but the magnificent castle surrounded with embattled walls, guarded with massy towers, and crowned with lofty pinnacles, served to inflame the imagination, and to create an attachment to some illustrious heiress, whose point of honour it was to be chaste and inaccessible. And the difficulty of success on these occasions seems in great measure to have given rise to that sentimental love of romance, which acquiesced in a distant respectful admiration, and did not aspire to possession. The want of an uniform administration of justice, the general disorder, and state of universal anarchy, which naturally sprang from the principles of the feudal policy, presented perpetual opportunities of checking the oppressions of arbitrary lords, of delivering captives injuriously detained in the baronial castles, of punishing robbers, of succouring the distressed, and of avenging the impotent and the unarmed, who were every moment exposed to the most licentious insults and injuries. The violence and injustice of the times gave birth to valour and humanity. The acts conferred a lustre and an importance on the character of men professing arms, who made force the substitute of law. In the mean time, the crusades, so pregnant with enterprise, heightened the habits of this warlike fanaticism; and when these foreign expeditions were ended, in which the hermits and pilgrims of Palestine had been defended, nothing remained to employ the activity of adventurers but the protection of innocence at home. Chivalry by degrees was consecrated by religion, whose authority tinctured every passion, and was engrrafted into every institution, of the superstitious ages, and at length com-

posed that singular picture of manners, in which the love of a god and of the ladies were reconciled, the faint and the hero were blended, and charity and revenge, zeal and gallantry, devotion and valour, were united.

Those who think that chivalry started late, from the nature of the feudal constitution, confound an improved effect with a simple cause. Not having distinctly considered all the particularities belonging to the genius, manners and usages of the Gothic tribes, and accustomed to contemplate nations under the general idea of barbarians, they cannot look for the seeds of elegance amongst men distinguished only for their ignorance and their inhumanity. The rude origin of this heroic gallantry was quickly overwhelmed and extinguished by the superior pomp which it necessarily adopted from the gradual diffusion of opulence and civility, and that blaze of splendour with which it was surrounded, amid the magnificence of the feudal solemnities. But above all, it was lost and forgotten in that higher degree of embellishment which at length it began to receive from the representations of romance.

From the foregoing observations taken together the following general and comprehensive conclusion seems to result:

Amid the gloom of superstition, in an age of the grossest ignorance and credulity, a taste for the wonders of oriental fiction was introduced into Europe, many countries of which were already seasoned to a reception of its extravagances by means of the poetry of the Gothic scalds, who perhaps originally derived their ideas from the same fruitful region of invention. These fictions, coinciding with the reigning manners, and perpetually kept up and improved in the tales of troubadours and minstrels, seem to have centred about the eleventh century in the ideal histories of Turpin and Geoffrey of Monmouth, which record the supposititious achievements of Charlemagne and King Arthur, where they formed the groundwork of that species of fabulous narrative called romance. And from these beginnings or causes, afterwards enlarged and enriched by kindred fancies fetched from the crusades, that singular and capricious mode of imagination arose, which at length composed the marvellous machineries of the more sublime Italian poets, and of their disciple Spenser.

## APPENDIX.

### ON THE SAXON ODE ON THE VICTORY OF ATHELSTAN.



THE text of this poem has been formed from a collation of the Cotton MSS. Tiberius A. vi. B. i. B. iv. In the translation an attempt has been made to preserve the original idiom as nearly as possible without producing obscurity; and in every deviation from this rule the literal meaning has been inserted within brackets. The words in parentheses are supplied for the purpose of making the narrative more connected, and have thus been separated from the context, that one of the leading features in the style of Anglo-Saxon poetry might be more apparent to the English reader. For the benefit of the Anglo-Saxon student, a close attention has been paid in rendering the grammatical inflections of the text, a practice almost wholly disused since the days of Hickes; but which cannot be too strongly recommended to every future translator from this language, whether of prose or verse. The extracts from Mr. Turner's and Mr. Ingram's versions cited in the notes, have been taken from the *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. ii. and the *Saxon Chronicle*. But those variations alone have been noticed which differed in common from the present translation. [In the present edition the corrections inserted in italics between brackets have been taken into the text, and the false translations cancelled.]

Æthelstán cyning,  
eorla<sup>1</sup> drihten,  
beorna báh-gyfa,

Æthelstan (the) king,  
lord of [men]  
bracelet-giver of [chieftains],

[<sup>1</sup> The reader must be cautioned against receiving this literal interpretation of the text, in the same literal spirit. The terms eorl and beorn—man and [chief]—are used with great latitude of meaning in Anglo-Saxon poetry; and though generally applied to persons of eminent rank or exalted courage, we have no proof of their appropriation as hereditary titles of distinction at the early period when this ode was composed. The word “Ætheling”—strictly speaking The son of the æthele or noble—appears to have gained an import in England, nearly corresponding to our modern *prince*. In the *Saxon Chronicle* it is almost always, if not exclusively, confined to personages of the blood royal. We must not confuse our word *elder* with the Anglo-Saxon *ealdor*, to which it is so like. *Elder* comes from the comparative *yldra*. *Ealdor* is a quite distinct word, and is seen in our *alderman*; it does not necessarily imply age, and the infant Edward is rightly called an “alder of earls.”]

“ And feng his bearn  
fyth-than to cyne-rice ;  
cyld unwaxen,  
eorla ealdor,  
tham was Eadweard nama.”

“ And his bairn took  
after that to the kingdom ;  
child unwaxen,  
alder of earls,  
to whom was Edward name.”]

and his brother eac,  
Eadmund ætheling,  
ealdor langne-tir ;  
geflogon æt fecce,  
fweorda ecgum,  
ymbe Brunanburh.  
Bord-weal clufon,  
heowon hetho-linda,<sup>2</sup>  
hamora lafum.<sup>3</sup>

and his brother eke,  
Eadmund (the) prince,  
[A life-long glory they won  
by striking at the battle.<sup>1</sup>  
with edges of swords,  
near Brunanburh.  
(They) clove the board-wall,  
hewed the [war] lindens,  
with relics of hammers (i. e. swords),

<sup>1</sup> [Sir F. Madden's correction of Mr. Price.]

<sup>2</sup> They hewed the noble banners, T. And hewed their banners, I. In this interpretation of "lind" all our vocabularies agree. The translation of the text has been founded upon the following authorities. When Beowulf resolves to encounter the "fire-drake" who had laid waste his territory, he orders a "wig-bord," war-board (as it is called) of iron to be made ; for we are told that,

" Wisse he gearwe,  
thet him holt-wudu,  
helpa ne meahte,  
lind with lige."

" He well knew  
that him the forest-wood,  
might not help,  
linden against fire." [Thorpe's ed. p. 157.]

And when Wiglaf prepares to join his lord in the combat, it is said of him :

" Hond-rond gefeng,  
Geolwe linde."

" [But] grasped his shield,  
the yellow linden." p. 177.]

In the fragment of Judith, "lind" and "bord" are used in the same connection as in the present text :

" Stopon heatho-rincas,  
beornas to beadowe,  
bordum bethealte,  
hwealfum lindum."

" (The) warriors stepped,  
chiefs to (the) battle,  
bedeckt (with) boards,  
(with) concave lindens."

The following extract from the fragment of Brithnoth shows both terms to have been synonymous :

" Leofsunu gemælde,  
and his lind ahof,  
bord to gebeorge."

" Leofsunu spoke,  
and hove up his linden  
board for protection."

It may, however, be contended, that though "lind" in all these passages evidently means a shield ; yet "heatholind," may have a different import [*heatho* is not an adjective but a substantive, meaning "war,"]. The following examples of a similar combination will remove even this objection :

" Ne hyrde ic cymlicor,  
ceol gegrwan,  
hilde-wæpnum,  
and heatho-wædum,  
billum and byrnum,"

" Nor heard I [more comelily]  
keel (ship) prepared,  
(with) war weapons,  
and [battle-garments].  
[has afforded] help."

" Nemne him heatho-byrne,  
helpe gefremede."

" Unless him (his) [war-mail]  
[had afforded] help."

Grimm found this expression in the Low-Saxon fragment of Hildebrand and Hathubrand, where—misled by the common interpretation of "lind-wiggende," "vexilliferi"—he has expended much ingenuity and learning in making a very simple narrative unnecessarily obscure.

" hewun harmlicco,  
huitte scilti,  
unti im iro lintun,  
luttilo wurtun."

" (they) hewed harm-like,  
(their) white shields,  
until to them their lindens  
became little."

Grimm translates "lintun," gebende—bands or girdles.

<sup>3</sup> The survivors of the family, T. With the wrecks of their hammers, I. The only authority for the former interpretation is a meaning assigned to "hamora" in

éaforan Eadweardes.  
Swa him geæthele<sup>1</sup> wæs  
from cneo-mægum,  
thæt híe æt campe oft,<sup>2</sup>  
with lathra gehwæne,  
land calgodon,  
hord and hámás,  
hettend crungon.<sup>3</sup>  
Scotta leode,  
and scip-flotan,

(the [offspring] of Edward.  
[So] was to them (their native) nobility,  
[as was their nature,]  
from (their) ancestors,  
that they [at] battle oft,  
against every [loathed one],  
(the) land preserved,  
hoard and homes,  
(the) enemy [cringed, *actively*.]  
(The) Scotish people,  
and the mariners,

Lye's vocabulary. It will be sufficient to remark, that if there were anything like probability to justify such a translation, we ought at least to read "With the survivors of the family;" as "lafum" stands in the ablative case plural. A similar expression occurs once in Béowulf, where we know from the context that neither of the versions cited above would suit the sense. The sword of Wiglaf has recently severed the dragon's body in two: with reference to which it is said,

" Ac him irenne ecga fornamon, hearde heatho-scearde, homera láfa, thæt se wid-floga, wundum stille hreás on hrúfan, hord-ærne néán."	" [For him from iron, edges had taken them away hard war-sheep, (the) hammers' legacies, so that the wide-flier, with wounds still had fall'n on the earth, nigh to the hoard-houfe." <i>Thorpe</i> , p. 190.]
--	---

In this poem "gomel-laf, eald-laf, yrfe-laf," are common expressions for a sword; and there can be little doubt but the language of the text is a metaphorical description of such a weapon. A similar phrase in Icelandic poetry would occasion no difficulty. [See Thorpe's *Glossary*, 1855.]

<sup>1</sup> As to them it was natural from their ancestors, T. So were they taught by kindred zeal, I. Ge-æthele is an *æwæf æsƿunus*. The version of the text is founded on the following declaration of Aelfwine a follower of Brithnoth :

" Ic will mine athelo, eallum gecythan, thaet ic wæs on Myrcon, micles cynnes."	" I will my nobility, manifest to all, that I among Mercians was, of a mickle kin."
--	--

Mr. Ingram's translation of cneo-mægum—kindred zeal, is perfectly indefensible. [Sir F. Madden has pointed out that Rask, in his Anglo-Saxon Grammar, considers Price's interpretation of æthele, *nobility*, open to question, and that it may, with equal correctness, be understood to mean *genius*, *indolence*.]

<sup>2</sup> That they in the field often, T. That they at camp often, I. Yet "camp-stede" is translated battle-place by Mr. Turner, and field of battle by Mr. Ingram. "Æt campe" would have been equally descriptive of a sea-fight. It has no connection with our modern *camp*, Fr. *campus*, Lat.

<sup>3</sup> Pursuing they destroyed the Scotish people, T. Pursuing fell the Scotish clans, I. In these translations, "hettend crungon" is separated from its context; and though it is a common practice of Anglo-Saxon poetry to unite, by the alliteration, lines wholly unconnected by the sense, yet in the present instance both are terminated by the same period. It may be questioned whether "hettan," *persequi*, has any existence beyond the pages of Lye, where it is inserted as the root of "hettend." There is reason to believe, that it was obsolete at a very early period, and that its participle present alone was retained in a substantive signification to denote an enemy or pursuing one. When the verb was required, it would seem to have been used without the aspirate :

" Ehtende wæs, deorc death-scua, duguthe and geogothe."	[Persecuting was (the) dark death fhade, Noble and [youth]. <i>Thorpe</i> , p. 12.]
---	---

fege feollon.<sup>1</sup>  
Feld dennade.<sup>2</sup>  
secga swate,<sup>3</sup>

fated fell.  
The field [flowed]  
with warriors' blood,

At all events the examples recorded by Lye only exhibit the substantive *hettend*, to which the following may be added :

“ gif ic thaet gefricge,  
ofer floda begang,  
thaet thec ymb-fittende,  
egefan thywath,  
swa thec hettende,  
hwilum dydon.”

[“ If I learn  
over the floods-course  
that thee, those dwelling around,  
with terror urge,  
as those hating thee,  
at times have done.”—*Thorpe*, p. 122.]

“ Syththan bie gefricgeath,  
friean userne,  
caldorleáfne  
thone the sér geheold,  
with hettendum,  
hord and rice.”

[“ When they shall learn,  
our lord is  
life-less;  
who had before defended  
against enemies,  
treasure and realm.”—*Ib.* p. 202.]

If, with Mr. Turner, we apply “pursuing” to the victors, Athelstan and Edward, the participle (as it then would be) ought to stand in the nominative case plural—*hettende*—and not in the accusative singular. [There is a dangerous mixture of *éhtan*, *persequi*, and *hátian*, *odisse*, in this note; I should be inclined to think that *éhtan* comes from *óht*, *terror*. *Hettan*, according to the custom of the Anglo-Saxons, which in certain cases doubles a consonant instead of writing it before *i* or *j*, corresponds to the Gothic *hatjan*, *odisse*. There is, however, another verb in Gothic, viz. *hatan*, and this the Anglo-Saxon seems to have followed in its verb, while it recorded the existence of the other by forming from it such a participial noun as *hettend*, *inimicus*, which, like *feond*, *hostis*, *fréonde*, *amicus*, is really the participle of a verb used as a noun. There should be a full stop after *hámas*. *Hattend* is the nom. to *crungon*: *the foes bowed*, cringed. So in *Beowulf*, l. 2419, “he under rande gegranc,” *he cringed under/sfield*, i. e. chèd.—*Kemble*.]

<sup>1</sup> In the languages of the north, “ *fæge*,” however written, means *fated to die*; or, to use the interpretation of the glossary to Sæmund's *Edda*, *morti jam definitus*, *brevi moriturus*. This is the only version equally suited to both examples in the present text; and it might be supported by numerous instances from Cædmon and *Beowulf*. A confirmation of its general import may also be drawn from the use of “ *unfægne* ” in the latter poem. [Mr. R. Taylor refers us to *Hickes' Thesaurus*, 114.]

“ Wyrd oft nereth,  
unfægne eorl,  
thonne his ellen deah.”

[“ Fate often faves  
an undoom'd man,  
when his valour availa.”—*Thorpe*, p. 39.]

<sup>2</sup> The Cotton MS. *Tiberius B. iv.* reads “ *dennode*; ” *Tiberius A. vi.* and *B. i.* read “ *dennade*, ” which is supported by the Cambridge MS. For this unusual expression no satisfactory meaning has been found; and it is left to the ingenuity and better fortune of some future translator. Mr. Turner and Mr. Ingram, who render this line—the field resounded, mid the din of the field—have followed a reading recorded by Gibson, “ *dynode*, ”—and which, notwithstanding the collective authority of four excellent manuscripts in favour of the present text, is possibly correct. In this case, however, “ *dynode* ” must not be interpreted in a literal sense, but considered as synonymous with the Icelandic “ *dundi*, ” from “ *dynia*, ” *resonare, irrue*. “ *Blodid dundi [dynode] og tarin tidi*, ” *Creberrima erat fillatio tum fanguinis tum lacrymarum*. “ *Hídin dyna yfir*, ”—*procella cum strepitu irruit*.

<sup>3</sup> The warriors *swate*, *T.* The warrior *swate*, *I.* To justify these translations we ought to read either, “ *secgas switon* ” or “ *secg swat*.” The latter, which offers least violence to the text, is clearly impossible, since no line of Anglo-Saxon poetry can have [fewer] than four syllables. There is, however, no necessity for changing a single letter of the text, as “ *swate* ” is the dat. case sing. of “ *swat*, ”

sith-than sunne úp,  
on morgen-tid,  
mære tunçgol,  
glád ofer grundas,<sup>1</sup>  
Godes candel beorht,  
éces Drihtnes ;  
oth-thæt sio æthele gesceaft,  
sah tó setle.<sup>2</sup>  
Thær læg seccg monig,  
gárum ageted,  
guman northerne,  
ofer scyld scoten.  
Swylic Scyttife eac,  
wérig wiges fæd.<sup>3</sup>  
Weft-Seaxe forth,  
ondlangne dæg,  
eorod-cyfum,<sup>4</sup>

since the sun up,  
on morrow-tide,  
mighty planet,  
glided over the [earth],  
bright candle of God,  
of the eternal Lord ;  
till the noble creature  
sank to (her) [settle].  
There lay many a warrior,  
[slain] by darts,  
northern m[e]n,  
shot over (the) shield.  
So Scotish eke,  
[satiated with battle]  
The Weft-Saxons forth,  
the continuous day,  
in battalions,

*blood*, and “secca” the gen. plural of “seccg.” [*Swát*, however, as Sir F. Madden pointed out, occurs in Anglo-Saxon in the usual sense of *sweat*.]

“ Thá thæt sƿeord ongan,  
æfter heatho-fwate,  
hilde gicelum,  
wig-bil wanian.”

[“ Then that sword began,  
after *with* battle-blood,  
in icicles of blood,  
that war-falchion, to fade away.”

—*Thorpe*, 108.]

“ Swa thæt blód gesprang,  
hátoft heatho-swáta.”

[“ As the blood sprang,  
hottest of hostile gores.”—*Ibid.* p. 111.]

“ Wulf Wonreding,  
wæpne geræhte,  
thæt him for swenge,  
swát ædrum sprung.”

[“ Wolf Wonred’s son,  
with his weapon reach’d,  
so that for the blow,  
blood sprang from the veins.”—*Ibid.* p. 200.]

The German “schweiß” (sweat) still means the *blood* of a wild boar.

<sup>1</sup> “Glád” is the past tense of *glidan*, to glide; and formed like *rád* from *ridan*, *bád* from *bidan*, &c. in all of which the accentuated *a* was pronounced like *o* in *rode*. It is the glode of “Le Bone Florence of Rome:”

“ Thorow the foreste the lady rode,  
All glemed there sche glode,  
Till sche came in a feld.”—v. 1710.

In *Sir Launfal*, Mr. Ritson leaves it unexplained.

“ Another cours togeder they ród,  
That syr Launfale helm of glód.”—v. 574.

Unless we admit this interpretation of “glád,” the first part of the proposition will be a mere string of predicates without a verb. The antithesis to “glád ofer grundas” is “sah to setle.”

<sup>2</sup> Haftened to her setting, T. Sat in the western main, I. Sah is the past tense of *figan*, to incline, sink down; and follows the same norm as *stah*, from *stigan*; *hnah*, from *hnigan*, &c.

<sup>3</sup> [Mr. R. Taylor’s correction, on the authority of Kemble’s *Beowulf*, 1837.]

<sup>4</sup> With a chosen band, T. With chosen troops, I. The Anglo-Saxon “cyft” though clearly derived from “ceofan,” to choose, appears to have obtained a specific meaning somewhat similar to our regiment or battalion.

“ Hæfde cista gehwilc,  
cuthes werodes,  
gar-berendra,  
guth-fremmendra,  
tyn hund geteled.”

“ Had each cift  
of approved troops,  
of spear-bearing,  
of war-enacting (ones)  
ten hundred taled (numbered).”

—*Cædmon*, 67, 25.

[Ed. Thorpe, 192. Mr. Thorpe remarks *ibid.*, “Cista is the gen. pl., and cannot

on last lægdon,  
lathum theodum.  
Heowan here-flyman,  
hindan thearle,<sup>1</sup>  
mecum mylen-scearpum.<sup>2</sup>  
Myrce ne wyrndon,  
heardes hand-plegan,  
hæletha nanum,  
thára the mid Anlafe,  
ofer ear-geblond,  
on lides bosme,  
land gesfoton,  
fæge to feohte.  
Fife lægon,  
on thám campfede,  
cyningas geouge,  
sweordum aſwefede.  
Swyld ſeofen éac,  
eorlas Anlafes;  
unrim heriges;<sup>3</sup>

laid on the foot-steps,  
to the loathed race.  
(They) hewed (the) fugitives,  
[from behind amain],  
with swords mill-sharp.  
The Mercians refused not,  
Of the hard hand-play,  
to [any heroes],  
of those who with Anlaf,  
over the ocean,  
[on] the ship's bosom,  
fought (our) land,  
fated to the fight.  
Five lay,  
on the battle-stead,  
young kings,  
[lumbered, *aſſ.*] with swords.  
So seven eke,  
earls of Anlaf's;  
numberleſs of the army,

have the same form in the *nom.* The gen. of *cifta* would be *ciftena*. The nom. is *cift*, gen. *cifta*.<sup>4</sup>”]

<sup>1</sup> The behind ones fiercely, T. Scattered the rear, I. But “hindan” possesses the same adverbial power as “eaftan” occurring below. [Mr. R. Taylor notes: “This power, however, is derived from the termination ‘an’ which, like the Greek *ōn*, denotes motion from a place.”]

<sup>2</sup> [Mr. Kemble notes: “Mill-sharp; from the grindstone with which the weapons were made keen: so ‘ſeūr-heard,’ hardened by scouring; *ſeol-ſcearp*, sharpened with the file, file-sharp.”]

<sup>3</sup> And innumerable of the army of the fleet—and the Scots. There was chased away the lord of the Northmen, by necessity driven to the voice of the ship. With a small host, with the crew of his ship, the king of the fleet departed on the yellow flood, T. And of the ship's crew unnumbered crowds. There was dispersed the little band of hardy Scots, the dread of the Northern hordes urged to the noisy deep by unrelenting fate. The king of the fleet with his slender craft escaped with his life on the felon flood, I. The present translation differs occasionally from both these versions. Where it agrees with either, no vindication will be necessary; but some of its variations are too important not to require an account of the authorities from whence they are derived.—The Anglo-Saxon “flota” (the floater) equally meant a ship and a sailor.

“Flota wæs on ythum,  
bát under beorge.”

[“The floater was on the waves,  
the boat under the mountain.”

—Thorpe, 15.]

Of its secondary meaning, a sailor, an example has already occurred in the compound, “ſcip-flota;” and the fragment of *Brithnoth* has preserved the simple substantive, as in the present text:

“Se flod ut-gewat,  
thá flotan stodon gearowe,  
wicinga fela,  
wiges georne.”

“The flood departed out,  
the sailors stood prepared,  
of the vikings many,  
desirous of battle.”

—Thorpe's *Analeſſa*, 123.

“Stefn,” like “flota,” had also a twofold meaning. Lye has only recorded one of these—the human voice—and upon this both the interpretations cited above are evidently founded. But it likewise implied the prow of a ship; and this is the only sense which will give connection or intelligence to the present narrative. A similar example occurs in *Beowulf*:

“Flota wæs on ythum,  
bát under beorge,”

[“The floater was on the waves,  
the boat under the mountain,

flotan and Sceotta.  
 Thær geflymed wearth,  
 Northmanna bregu,  
 nyde gebæded,  
 to lides stefne,  
 little werede.  
 Cread cnear<sup>1</sup> on-flot,  
 cyning ut-gewat,  
 on fealone flod,  
 feorh generede.  
 Swylic thær éac se froda,<sup>2</sup>  
 mid fleame cóm,

of sailors and Scots.  
 There was chased away,  
 the leader of the Northmen, (i. e. Anlaf.)  
 compelled by need,  
 to the ship's prow,  
 with a little band.  
 (The) ship [crowded] afloat,  
 (the) king departed out,  
 on the fallow flood,  
 preserved (his) life.  
 So there also the [venerable] one,  
 by flight came,

beornas gearwe  
 on stefn stigon."

the ready warriors  
 On the prow stopt."]

In German, "steven" still means the stem of a ship; and in Danish this part of a vessel is called the *for-stævn*, by way of distinction from the *bag-stævn*, or stern. It will also be found in the second part of the *Edda*:

" Brim-runar scaltu rista,  
 ef thu vilt borgit hafa,  
 a fundi segl-maurom ;  
 a stafni thær scal rista,  
 oc a stafnar-blatha,  
 oc leggia eld i ár."

" Sea-runes shalt thou carve,  
 if thou wilt have protected,  
 sail-horses (ships) in the sea ;  
 in the prow shalt (thou) carve  
 and in the stern-blade, (rudder)  
 and lay fire in the oar."

But "stefn" must not be confounded with "stefna," a ship, frequently occurring in *Beowulf*, and which the Latin translation always, I believe, renders "prora."

" Gewát tha ofer wæg-holm,  
 winda gefyfed,  
 flota fami-heals,  
 fugle gelicofit.  
 Oth-thæt umb án tid,  
 otheres dogores,  
 wunden stefna,  
 gewaden hefde,  
 thaet thá lithende,  
 land gesawon."

" Departed then over (the) billowy main,  
 hastened by the wind,  
 the foamy-necked ship,  
 likeliest to a fowl.  
 Till that about six o'clock,  
 of the other (next) day,  
 the curved bark  
 had (fo) waded,  
 that the voyagers  
 saw land."—p. 19.

For an illustration of "cread" the reader is referred to the Appendix to vol. ii. where this line is translated. And in further support of the version there given, the following extract from the fragment of *Brithnoth* may be quoted: (Thorpe's *Anlaf*. p. 22 :)

" We willath mid tham sceattum,  
 us to scype gangan,  
 on-flot feran,  
 and eow frithes healdan."

" We will with the scot (treasures),  
 us to ship gang,  
 afloat proceed,  
 and hold peace with you."

[Mr. Kemble observes here: "It should be remarked that the distinction between *stefn*, *prora*, and *stefna*, *vora*, depends upon the genders, the former being masculine, the latter feminine. When *a* is appended to a substantive of this nature, it connects it with a kind of epicene masculine, denoting that the person represented is distinguished by the possession of, or partaking in, that which the original substantive signifies: thus *neb*, a *beak*, was *hyrned-nebba*, the *horned beaked one*, i. e. *the raven*. Here also *wunden-stefna* means *the curved-proured one*, i. e. *the ship*.]"

<sup>1</sup> [Obn. Chnar, O. N. Knöör, *navis mercatoria, navigium*.—Thorpe.]

<sup>2</sup> The routed one, T. the valiant chief, I. By which of these epithets are we to translate the title bestowed upon Sæmund, for his extraordinary learning?—Sæmundr hinn frodi. The age of Constantine procured for him this distinction, which in *Beowulf* is so frequently applied to the veteran Hrothgar. [Fród, ætate provectus, prudens.—Kemble.]

on his cyththe north,  
 Constantinus,  
 har hylderinc.<sup>1</sup>  
 Hreman ne thórfte,  
 meca gemanan.<sup>2</sup>  
 Her wæs his maga-sceard,<sup>3</sup>  
 freonda<sup>4</sup> gefylled,  
 on folc-stede,  
 beslægen æt fæcce ;  
 and his sunu (he) forlet,  
 on wæl-stowe,  
 wundum forgrunden,  
 geongne æt guthe.  
 Gylpan ne thórfte,  
 beorn blanden-feax,<sup>5</sup>

on his country north,  
 Constantine,  
 hoary warrior.  
 He needed not to boast,  
 of the commerce of swords.  
 Here was his [band of kinsmen]  
 of friends [deprived].  
 on the folk-stead,  
 [bereft at battle.—T.H.]  
 and his son he left,  
 on the slaughter-place,  
 mangled with wounds,  
 young [at] the fight.  
 He needed not to boast,  
 [warrior] blended-haired,

<sup>1</sup> The hoarse din of Hilda, T. The hoary Hildrinc, I. It is quite an assumption of modern writers, that this goddess of war was acknowledged by the Anglo-Saxons; and no ingenuity can reconcile Mr. Turner's translation with the Anglo-Saxon text. Mr. Ingram most unnecessarily makes "hylderinc" a proper name, which, if correct on the present occasion, would be equally so in the following passage, where Beowulf plunges into the "mere" to seek the residence of Grendel's mother :

" Brim-wylim onfeng,  
 hilderince :"

" Sea-wave received  
 (the) warrior :"

or in the preamble to Brithnoth's dying address :

" Tha gyt thaet word geƿæð,      " Then yet the word quoth,  
 hár hilderinc."

" (the) hoary warrior."

With these examples before us, there can be little doubt but that we ought to insert "rinc" in the following extract relating to the funeral obsequies of Beowulf :

" Tha wæs wunden gold,  
 on wæn hladen,  
 æghwæs unrím,  
 æthelinge geboren,  
 hár hilde [rinc]  
 to Hrónes-næsse."

" Then was twisted gold,  
 on the wain laden,  
 of every kind numberless,  
 and the prince borne,  
 The hoar warrior,  
 to Hrones-nefss."—[Thorpe, 211.]

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Ingram, who reads "mæcan gemanan," translates it "among his kindred." But "mæca," if it exist at all as a nominative case, can never mean "a relative."

<sup>3</sup> He was the fragment of his relations, of his friends felled in the folk-place, T. Here was his remnant of relations and friends slain with the sword in the crowded fight, I. It is difficult to conceive upon what principle the soldiers of Constantine, who fell in the battle, could be called either the fragment or remnant of his followers. A similar expression—here-laf—is afterwards applied with evident propriety to the survivors of the conflict. The present translation has been hazarded, from a belief that "sceard" is synonymous with "sceare" (the German schaar, a band or troop); and "maga-sceard," like "magodriht," descriptive of the personal or household troops of Constantine.

" Thá wæs Hrothgare,  
 here-spēd gyfen,  
 wiges weorþ-mynd,  
 thaet him his wine-magas,  
 georne byrdon—  
 oþþthæt fēo geogoth geweo  
 mago-driht micel."

" Then was to Hrothgar,  
 martial success given,  
 warlike glory ;  
 so that his dear kinsmen  
 willingly obeyed—  
 until the youth grew up,  
 a great kindred train."—[Ibid. 5.]

<sup>4</sup> [That is, deprived through their being felled (befylled).—Thorpe.]

<sup>5</sup> The lad with flaxen hair, T. The fair-haired youth, I. Mr. Turner appears

bill-geflethes,  
eald inwitta;<sup>1</sup>  
ne Anlaf thy má,  
mid heora here-lafum,  
hlihan ne thorfton,  
thæt hí beadu-worca,<sup>2</sup>  
beteran wurdon,  
on camp-stede,  
cumbol-gehnastes,  
gár mittinge,  
gumena gemotes,  
wæpen-gewrixles,  
thæs the híe on wæl-felda,  
with Eadweardes,  
eáforan plegodon.  
Gewiton hym tha Northmen,  
nægledon cnearrum,  
dreorig daretha láf,<sup>3</sup>

of the bill-clashing,  
old deceiver;  
nor Anlaf any more,  
with the relics of their armies,  
needed not to laugh,  
that they of warlike works,  
better (men) were,  
on the battle-stead,  
[of] the conflict of banners,  
the meeting of spears,  
the assembly of men,  
the interchange of weapons,  
[from the time that] they on the slaug-  
ter-field,  
with Edward's  
children played.  
The Northmen departed  
(in their) nailed ships,  
gory relic of the darts,

to refer these expressions to Constantine's son; Mr. Ingram certainly does. There would be little propriety in declaring a dead man's inability to boast, or the unfitness of such a proceeding even if there were any thing to colour such an interpretation. But blonden-feax is a phrase which in Anglo-Saxon poetry is only applied to those advanced in life, and is used to denote that mixture of colour which the hair assumes on approaching or increasing senility. The German "blond," at the present day, marks a colour neither white nor brown, but mingled with tints of each. [In Cædmon, "Blonden feax" is applied to Sarah and to Lot. See Mr. Thorpe's edit. and the note, p. 141.—R. Taylor.]

<sup>1</sup> The old in wit, T. Nor old Inwood, I. The orthography of the present text is supported by the Cotton MSS. Tiberius A. vi. & B. i. Mr. Ingram reads "in-widda," of which he has made "Inwood;" though the learned translator has omitted to inform us who this venerable personage might be. It is rather singular that he should appear again, with no slight ubiquity of person, in the fragment of Judith:

" Swa se inwidda,  
ofer ealne dæg,  
driht-guman fine,  
drencte mid wine."

" So the deceiver,  
over the whole day,  
his followers  
drenched with wine."

<sup>2</sup> That they for works of battle were, T. That they on the field of stern command better workmen were, I. But "beado-worca" is the genitive case plural of "beadu-worc," and to justify these translations ought to have been "beadu-worcum" (T.) or "beaduwyrtan" (I).

<sup>3</sup> Dreary relics of the darts, T. Dreary remnant, I. This expression seems rather to refer to the wounded condition of the fugitives. The present version may be justified by the following extracts from Beowulf:

" [Thonne wæs theós medo-heal,  
on morgen-tid,  
driht-sele dreor-fah,  
thonne dæg lixte,  
eal benc-thelu,  
blode bestýmed.]

" Thonne blóde-fäh,  
húfa félét,  
heoro-dreórig stod.

" Wæter under wolcnum,  
wæl-dreóre fág.]

" [Then was this mead-hall  
at morning-tide,  
this princely court stained with gore,  
when the day dawned,  
all the bench-floor  
with blood bestained.]—*Thorpe*, 33.

" When with blood stained  
the best of houses,  
all gory stood."—*Ibid.* 63.

" Water under the clouds,  
stained with deadly gore."—*Ibid.* 109.]

on dinges<sup>1</sup> mere,<sup>2</sup>  
ofer deep wæter,  
Dylin fecan,  
eft Yraland,<sup>3</sup>  
æwisc-mode.  
Swylce<sup>4</sup> thā gebrother,  
begen æt famne,  
cyning and ætheling,  
cyththe sohton,  
Weft-Saxna land,  
wiges hremige.<sup>5</sup>  
Læton him behindan,

on, — — —  
over deep water,  
Dublin to seek,  
Ireland again,  
with a shamed mind.  
So too the brothers,  
both together,  
king and prince,  
sought (their) country,  
land of the Weft Saxons,  
[in] (the) war exulting.  
(They) left behind them

<sup>1</sup> This reading has been retained in preference to the “dinnes” of Gibson, on the authority of Tiberius B. i. The other Cotton MSS. read “dynges” A. vi. “dynges” B. iv.

<sup>2</sup> On the stormy sea, T. On the roaring sea, I. There is every probability that these translations give the sense of this passage, though some doubts may be entertained as to the integrity of the present text. If “dynges-mere” be the genuine reading, it must be considered as a parallel phrase with “wigeheard, hordes-heard,” &c. where two substantives are united in one word, the former of which stands in the genitive case with an adjective power. Of this practice the examples are too numerous and too notorious to require further illustration. “Dinges-mere” would then be a “kenningar nafn” given to the ocean from the continual clashing of its waves. For it will be remembered that the literal import of “mere” is a mere or lake, and this could not be applied to the Irish channel, without some qualifying expression. It is clearly impossible that “dinges,” if correct, can stand alone, as “on” never governs a genitive case. On “thonec mere,” on “thænc mere.” See Lye in voce.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Ingram retains “heora land” in the text, and translates the variation—Yraland. All the Cotton MSS. unite in reading “eft;” and we learn from other sources that this statement is historically correct.

<sup>4</sup> [Postea frater uteque rediit Weft-sexe, belli reliquias post se deferentes, carnes virorum in escam paratas. Ergo corvus niger, ore cornutus, et buffo livens, aquila cum milvo, canis lupusque mixtus colore, his sunt delicis diu recreati. Hen. Hunting. lib. v.]

<sup>5</sup> The screamers of war, I. In fight triumphant, I. It has already been said of the fugitive Constantine that he had no cause to exult—hreman ne thórfte; this is left to the victors. This expression occurs repeatedly in Beowulf, where it is always applied to the successful party:

“ Thanon eft gewát,  
húthe hrémig,  
tó hám faran,  
mid thære wæl-fylle,  
wica neófan.

“ guth-rinc gold-wlanc,  
græs-moldan træd,  
fince hrémig.”

“ Nú her thára banena,  
byre nát hwylces,  
frætwum hrémig,  
on flet gæth;  
morthres gylpeth,  
and thone maththum<sup>6</sup> byreth,  
thone the thu mid rihte,  
rædan sceoldest.”

“ Thence (Grendel) again departed,  
in his prey exulting,  
to (his) home (to) go,  
with the slaughtered corpses,  
his quarters to visit.”—*Thorpe*, 9.

“ the warrior proud with gold  
trod the græs mould,  
in treasure exulting.”—*Ibid.* 126.

“ Now here of those murderers  
the son I know not whose,  
in arms exulting,  
walks in the court  
of the slaughter boasts,  
and the treasure bears,  
which thou with right  
shouldst command.”—*Thorpe*, 138.

<sup>6</sup> Maththum must not be confounded with mathnum, the dative case plural of mathm.

hrá brittan, fallowig padan, <sup>1</sup> thone fweartan hræfn, hyrned-nebban ; and thone hasu padan, <sup>2</sup> earn æftan hwit, <sup>3</sup>	(the) corse to enjoy, (the) fallow [of coat], (the) swarth raven, [with] horned [nib], and the [fallow-toad], eagle white [after],
---	---

<sup>1</sup> The dismal kite, T. The fallow kite, I. Whatever idea may have been attached to "pedan," it is manifestly not a species but a genus. It occurs again immediately as characteristic of the eagle. Cædmon unites with the present text in calling the raven both "swarth and fallow."

" Let tha ymb worn daga  
fweartane fleogan,  
hræfn ofer heah flod.  
Noe tealde,  
thæt he on neode hine  
fecan wolde ;  
ac se feond,  
fallowig fetheras,  
fecan nolde." [ed. Thorpe, p. 86.]

" Then after some days (he) let  
swarth fly,  
raven over high flood.  
Noah [told]  
that he [with joy] him  
seek would ;  
but the [rejoicing one]  
fallowy of feathers,  
would not seek (him)."

It will be remembered that the Anglo-Saxon "blac" was equivalent to our black and yellow. [Ger. bleich, pale, hence Engl. to bleach. In Beowulf, l. 3599, we have, notes Mr. R. Taylor, "thæt loræfor blaca," which Mr. Kemble renders "the pale raven." In the Glossary to Beowulf, vol. i. p. 259, he refers "pada" to the Gothic "paida," tunica, and points out the following epithets as formed with it: "falo-pad" and "fallowig-pad." In the Exeter Book, fol. 87, b, and "Salwig-pada," Judith, p. 24 : as also in the text above, *qui vestem fulvum gerit*—which then would be dun-coated, tawny-vested. See also the Glossary to Thorpe's *Analecta*. But Mr. Thorpe, in his edit. of *Beowulf*, 1855, p. 120, renders blaca black, though he glosses it pale.]

<sup>2</sup> And the hoarse toad, T. And the hoarse vulture, I. The latter version is totally without authority. [As to] the former, the Cotton MS. Tiberius A. vi. reads haso (the nom. case), which shows this word to have had a twofold termination: haso and haswe—like falo and falwe, fealo and fealwe. The nomenclature of Anglo-Saxon colours must necessarily be very obscure ; but as we find the public road called "fealwe stræte" (Beowulf) ; and the passage made from the Israelites over the Red Sea "haswe here-stræta" (Cædmon), the version of the present text cannot be materially out. [Hasu-padan (fallowcoated) is the true reading : toad as paddle with two d's.—H. Sweet.]

<sup>3</sup> The eagle afterwards to feath on the white flesh, T. And the eagle swift to consume his prey, I. The very simplicity of the Anglo-Saxon text appears to have excited distrust in the only translation these words are susceptible of. The ornithologist will perceive in it a description of the *Haliætus albicilla*, or white-tailed sea-eagle. The phrase is not without a parallel in Beowulf, where the bard is describing the ahen lances with their steel-clad points :

" [gáras stodon,  
fæ-manna searo,  
samod ætgædere,  
æsc holt ufan græg.]

" The javelins stood  
the seamen's arms,  
all together,  
the ash wood gray above." [Thorpe, p. 23.]

There is so close a resemblance between the present text and a passage in the fragment of Judith, that it will not be too much to assume that they have been drawn from some common source, or that the one has had its influence in producing the other :

" Thæs se hlanca geseah,  
wulf in walde,  
and se wanna hrefn,  
wæl-gifre fugel,

" Of this rejoiced the lank  
wolf in the wold ;  
and the wan raven,  
slaughter-desiring fowl,

æsæs brucan,  
grædigne guth-hafoc ;  
and thæt græge deor,  
wulf on wealde.  
Ne wearth wæl māre,  
on thys igland,  
æfre gyta,  
folces gefyllde,  
beforan thissum,  
sweordes ecgum,  
thæs us secgath bēc,  
ealde uthwitan,  
fith-than eaftan hider,  
Engle and Seaxe,  
úp becomon,  
ofer brade brimu,  
Brytene sohton,  
wlance wig-smithas,  
Wealas<sup>1</sup> ofer-comon,  
eorlas árhwate,<sup>2</sup>  
eard begeaton.

of the corse to enjoy,  
greedy war-hawk ;  
and th[e] gray [deer],  
(the) wolf [in] the wold.  
Nor was (there) a greater slaughter  
on this island  
ever yet,  
of folk felled,  
before this,  
by (the) sword's edges,  
[from] that that say to us (in) books  
old historians,  
since [from the east] hither  
Angles and Saxons  
up came,  
over (the) broad seas,  
Britain fought,  
[proud] war-smiths  
overcame (the) [strangers],  
[men] exceeding [keen],  
obtained (the) [country].

westan begen,  
thæt him tha theod-guman,  
thohton tilian,  
fylle on fægum.  
Ac him fleah on lafe,  
earn ætes georn,  
urig fetheras,  
falowig pada,  
fang hilde leoth,  
hynred neorra.”

[they both knew]  
that to them the people,  
thought to prepare,  
a falling among the fated.  
But on their footsteps flew  
eagle of food desirous,  
dewy (?) of feathers,  
fallowy [coated ?],  
fang the war song  
horned nibbed one.”—

[*Thorpe's Anal.* p. 137.]

From Cædmon, edit. Thorpe, pp. 119-22, Mr. R. Taylor has added the following illustration :

“ Song se wanna fugel,  
under deoreth-sceaftum,  
deawig fetheras.”]

<sup>1</sup> As this name is foreign to the Celtic dialects, it probably was conferred upon the inhabitants by their Teutonic neighbours. In old German poetry every thing translated from a foreign language was said to be taken from the Wälische (Welsh), and the Pays de Vaud is still called the Wallifer-land. The following singular passage is taken from Hartmann von Awe's romance of Iwain and Gawain, where Welsh indisputably means English :

“ Er was Hartman genant,  
and was ain Awere,  
der bracht dist mere,  
zü Tisch als ich han vernommen,  
do er usz Engellandt was commen,  
da er vil zit was gewessen,  
hat ers an den Welschen buchen gelesen.” (and where) he had read it in the Welsh books.”

“ He was named Hartman,  
and was an Auwer,  
who brought this tale  
into German as I have heard,  
after he came out of England,  
where he had been a long time,  
books.”

<sup>2</sup> The earls excelling in honour, T. most valiant earls, I. In Anglo-Saxon “hwate” and “cene” are synonymous, meaning both keen and bold. It is usual to consider “arhwate” and many other similar expressions as compounded of “ar,” honour; an error which has arisen from not sufficiently attending to the distinction between the substantive and the preposition “ar.” In such combinations as “ar-wurthe,” “ar-fæst,” “ar-hwate,” “ær-god,” the preposition is prefixed in the sense of excess, as in the comparative degree of adjectives it is subjoined. “Ar-wurthe,”

venerable, is from “ar-wurthian,” to esteem greatly: and the following passage from Beowulf exhibits one of the combinations above cited, in a sense which cannot be mistaken:

“Swylc scolde eorl,  
wesan ær-god,  
swylc Æschere wæs.”

“So should earl  
be exceeding good,  
so as Æscher was.”—p. 101.

The most simple and perhaps original idea attached to this preposition (of such extensive use in all the dialects of the North) was priority, from whence by an easy transition it came to mean priority in point of magnitude, and thence in point of excellence (honour). The analogous expressions prime good, prime strong, prime ripe, &c., may be heard in every province. The compounds “ar-full,” propitious, “ar-leas,” impious, are formed from the substantive “á,” a word of very extensive signification, and which may be rendered goodness, kindness, benefit, care, favour, &c.:

“Thá spræc guth-cyning,  
Sodoma aldror,  
secum gefylled,  
to Abrahame;  
him wæs ara thearf.”

“Then spoke the war-king,  
prince of Sodom,  
whose warriors were felled,  
to Abraham;  
to him was need of kindnesses.”

*Cædmon*, 46, 2.

It is impossible to translate “secum afylléd” literally, without causing obscurity. [Mr. Thorpe reads “befylled,” and renders it “of his warriors bereft,” and “ara” he translates “wealth,” p. 128.—*Anon.*]

“Æla frea beorht,  
folces scyppend,  
gemilia thin mod,  
me to gode,  
file thyne are,  
thynum earminge.”

“O bright Lord  
creator of (the) folk  
soften thy mind,  
me to good,  
grant thy favour,  
[to thy poor one.]”

*Cotton Prayers*, Jul. A. 2.

“Fægre acende—  
beornum to frofre,  
eallum to are,  
ylda bearnum.”

“Fair brought forth—  
for [chiefs'] consolation  
for the benefit of all  
sons of men.”

Jul. A. 2.

Here too the dative cases plural cannot be translated. This term is of frequent occurrence in old English poetry, where the context having supplied the meaning, the glossographers had only to contend about the etymon:

“Lybeaus thurstede sore  
And sayde Maugys thyn ore.”

*Lyb. Dis.* v. 1337.

“The maister fel adoun on kne, and criede mercy and ore.”

*R. of Gloucester*, p. 9.

“Y aske mercy for Goddys ore.”

*Erl of Tholous*, v. 583.

The meaning of “ore” when contrasted with the preceding extracts, will be too obvious to require any comment. The substitution of o for á was evidently the work of the Normans. The Anglo-Saxon á was pronounced like the Danish æ, the Swedish å, or our modern o in more, fore, &c. The strong intonation given to the words, in which it occurred, would strike a Norman ear as indicating the same orthography that marked the long syllables of his native tongue, and he would accordingly write them with an e final. It is from this cause that we find hár, sár, hát, bát, wá, án, bán, stán, &c. written hore (hoar), fore, hote (hot), bote (boat), woe, one, bone, stone, some of which have been retained. The same principle of elongation was extended to all the Anglo-Saxon vowels that were accentuated; such as réc, reke (reek), líf, life, góð, gode (good), scúr, thure (shower); and hence the majority of those e's mute upon which Mr. Tyrwhitt has expended so much

## II.

## On the Lais of Marie de France.

 THESE BRITISH LAIS, of which I have given specimens at the beginning of the first Dissertation, and of which Sir Launfal is one, are discovered to have been translated into French from the language of Armorican Bretagne, about the thirteenth century, by Marie de France. But Marie's was not the only collection of *British Lais* in French: as appears, not only from the *Erle of Tholouse*, but by the romance of *Emare*, a translation from the French, which has this similar passage, *¶. ult. :*

Thys ys on of Brytayne layes  
That was used of old dayes.<sup>1</sup>

The *Song of Sir Gowther*<sup>2</sup> is [probably in error] said by the writer

unfounded speculation. This subject will be resumed in a later volume, in an examination of that ingenious critic's *Essay upon the Language and Verification of Chaucer*.

Mr. R. Taylor notes here that the following descriptions of battles will show how much the characteristics of the earlier Saxon poetry continued to prevail even till the reign of King John. It is from the *Brut* of Lagamom, supposed to be of that date" (printed under the care of Sir F. Madden in 1847, 3 vols. 8vo.):

" To-gadere heo tuhten,  
& lathliche fuhten :  
hardeliche heuwen,  
helmes ther gullen  
starcliche to-stopan  
mid steles egge.  
Alle dæi ther ilæste  
fæht mid tham mæste,  
a thet that thuftere niht  
to-dælde heore muchele fift.  
Læien a ba halue  
cnihtes to-heouwen.  
Tha ferdan heom imetten,  
fastliche on-slogen ;  
fnelle heore kenpen,  
feollen tha *weie*,  
volden to grunde,  
ther wes muchel blod gute ;  
balu ther wes rive,  
bruslidle scafies,  
beornes ther veollen."  
]

<sup>1</sup> [Both printed by Ritson in his Metr. Rom. 1802.]

<sup>2</sup> [Printed in Utterson's Collection, 1817.]

to be taken from one of the *Layes of Brytayne*: and in another place he calls his story *The first Laye of Britanye*.<sup>1</sup> [Though professing to be a lay of Brittany, *Sir Gowther* has no connection with those early Armoricane fictions, which centre in the achievements of Arthur and his knights; and the declaration was probably resorted to, from the popularity attached to the name. Whether it be of genuine English growth, as suggested by its editor, is a question not so easily decided. The allegation in the text can go for little unaided by evidence of a more conclusive nature, or, if received at all, can only be interpreted in the same literal sense as the assertions of Marie de France—that such fictions were derived from Brittany. The mention of “*Gotlake*,” the name of a well-known Saxon saint, and the agnomen under which Sir Gowther found his way into the calendar, might favour the supposition of an English origin. But the legend of the real St. Guthlac is still preserved both in Saxon and Latin, and has not the slightest affinity with the story detailed in the lay. The same motives, which would prompt the assumption of a well-known source of popular fiction, would not object to the adoption of an English name, when recommended by similar advantages. It is true the very premises are here gratuitous; but had the author been an Englishman, or had the poem been composed in England, we might reasonably expect that some direct or latent allusion would still be discoverable either to this country generally, or to Croyland, the reputed scene of St. Guthlac’s miracles. As it is, a total silence is observed on either subject; and the principal agents are all foreigners—the Duke of Ostrych, the Emperor of Almayne, the Sowdan of Perce, &c. The name itself speaks nothing. *Guth-her*, which a strong guttural accentuation would render *Gough-ther*, is a genuine Saxon appellative; but by the same process the French *Gautier* (*Gowtere*) would assume a form nearly similar. The old Platt-deutsch romance of *Zeno*, which has been conjectured to be a kindred story, is a far more pleasing fiction, and though affording the same admixture of romantic and legendary lore, is free from that disgusting degradation of the hero, which marks Sir Gowther for the offspring of the monastery. The child, whose malicious and insatiate appetite produces so much mischief, is not the son of Satan, but the “*fowle fende*” himself, who assumes the form and place of the infant *Zeno*; and the following passage of the German romance is the only one in strict parallel with Sir Gowther’s narrative:

Do lach de bose Satanas  
Unde wenede, also eyn kint dot.  
Do entwakede de vruewe gut,  
Unde wolde dem kinde spysen geven:  
Do behelt se kume dat leven.  
He soch so sere ut oren brosten,  
Dat man se laben moste.  
Se wunnen mennich vrone wif,

<sup>1</sup> MSS. Reg. 17 B. xliv.

Se al verloren oren lif,  
Van dem vil ungehuren.

Which may be thus done into English :

That evil Satanas then lough,  
And whined as a child mote do ;  
Then awaked that lady good,  
And thought to give the child some food ;  
But at her breast he soke so sore,  
That she had nigh her life forlore.  
They hired many a goodly wife,  
But through that fiend they lost their life.]<sup>1</sup>

Chaucer's *Frankelein's Tale* was also a *Bretagne Lay*. In the Prologue he says :

This olde gentil Bretons in here daies  
Of divers aventure maden laies  
Rimyden in her first Breton tonge,  
Whiche laies with here instrumentes thei songe.

Here he translates from Marie, although this story is not in her manuscript, viz. fol. 181 :

Li auntien Bretun curteis.

But in his *Dreme* he seems to have copied her *Lay of Eliduc*.<sup>2</sup> To the *Britisb Lais* I would also refer *La Lai du Corn*, which begins :

De un aventure ei avint  
A la court del bon rei Artus.<sup>3</sup>

It probably existed before the year 1300. The story, which much resembles the old French metrical romance, called *Le Court Mantel*, is slightly touched in *Morte Arthur*.<sup>4</sup> A magical horn, richly garnished, the work of a fairy, is brought by a beautiful boy riding on a fleet courser, to a sumptuous feast held at Carleon by King Arthur, in order to try the fidelity of the knights and ladies, who are in number sixty thousand. Those who are false, in drinking from this horn, spill their wine. The only successful knight, or he who accomplishes the adventure, is Garaduc or Cradok. I will here give the description of the horn :

Un dauncel,<sup>5</sup>  
Mout avenaunt et bel,

<sup>1</sup> [Mr. Price's Addition.]

<sup>2</sup> [See Difs. i.]

<sup>3</sup> MSS. Digb. 86, Bibl. Bodl. membran. 4to.

<sup>4</sup> ii. 83. [See also *Rem. of the Early Pop. Poetry of Engl.* 1864, i. 35-49.]

<sup>5</sup> More properly written daunzel, or danzel. As in the old French romance of *Garin*,

“Et la danzel que Bues ot norris.”

And in other places. So in a fragment of one of [the] Provençal sonnets, [attributed to Richard I.],

“E lou donzel de Thuscana.”

“For Boys Tuscany is the country.” In Spanish, *Lo Donzell*. See Andr. Bosch, *Dels Titols de honor de Cathalanya*, l. iii. c. 3, fect. 16. In some of these instances the word is restrained to the sense of squire. It is from the Latin *domicellus*. Froissart calls Richard II., when Prince of Wales, “Le jeune Damoisel Richart,” tom. i. c. 325. [Mr. Ritson denies that the sonnet in question was

Seur un cheval corant,  
 En palleis vint eraunt :  
 En fa main tont un cor  
 A quatre bendel de or,  
 Ci com etoit diveure  
 Entailliez de ad trifure,<sup>1</sup>  
 Peres ici ont assises,  
 Qu en le or furent mises,  
 Berreles et fardoines,  
 Et riches calcedoines ;  
 Il fu fust de ollifaunt,  
 Ounques ne ni si graunt,  
 Ne si fort, ne si bel,  
 Desus ont un anel,  
 Neèle de ad argent,  
 Eschelettes il ont cent  
 Perfectees de or fin,  
 En le tens Constantin,  
 Les fist une Fee,  
 Qu preuz ert, et senee,  
 E le corn destina  
 Si cum vous orres ja :  
 Qu sour le corn ferroit  
 Un petit de soun doit,  
 Ses eschelettes cent  
 Souuent tant doucement,  
 Qu harpe ne viele  
 Ne deduit de pucelle,  
 Ne sereigne du mer  
 Nest tele desconter.

These lines may be thus interpreted. “A boy, very graceful and beautiful, mounted on a swift horse, came into the palace of King

written by Richard I.; and follows Nostradamus, who attributes it to the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa. It is, however, a well-known fact, that this Emperor was so firm in his predilection for his native tongue, that though acquainted with several European languages, he constantly refused to converse with the ambassadors of foreign states who were ignorant of German, except through the medium of an interpreter. This, coupled with the general inaccuracy of Nostradamus’s historical notices, might justify a doubt as to the correctness of the statement. It would, however, be perfectly in character if spoken of the Emperor Frederic II., who was himself a minnesinger or troubadour, and a patron of troubadours.—*Price.*]

<sup>1</sup> Or rather trifore. Undoubtedly from the Latin triforium, a rich ornamented edge or border. The Latin often occurs under Dugdale’s Inventory of Saint Paul’s, in the *Monasticon*, viz. “Morsus [a buckle] W. de Ely argenteus, cresta ejus argentea, cum triforio exterius aureo et lapillis insitis,” &c. tom. iii. Eccl. Cath. p. 309. Triforiatus repeatedly occurs in the same page, as thus: “Morsus Petri de Blois triforiatus de auro.”—“Medio circulo [of a buckle] aurato, triforato, inserto grossis lapidibus,” &c.—“Cum multis lapidibus et perlis insitis in limbis, et quadraturis triphoratus aureis,” &c. &c. *Ibid.* p. 309, *et seq.* It is sometimes written triforia. As, “Pannus cuius campus purpureus, cum xiv listis in longitudine ad modum triforiorum contextis.” *Ibid.* p. 326, col. 2; trifure, in the text, may be literally interpreted jewel-work. As in *Chron. S. Dion.* tom. iii. *Collect. Histor. Franc.* p. 183. “Il estoient de fin or esmere et aourné de tres riches pierres precieuses d’ uere [œuvre] triphoire.” Which Aimon calls “gemmique ornata opere inclusorio,” that is, work consisting of jewels set in. *De Geß. Franc.* lib. ii. cap. ix. p. 44, G. edit. 1603.

Arthur. He bore in his hand a horn, having four bandages of gold ; it was made of ivory, engraved with *trifaire* : many precious stones were set in gold, beryls, sardonyces, and rich chalcedonies : it was of elephant [ivory] : nothing was ever so grand, so strong, or so beautiful : at bottom was a ring [or rim] wrought of silver ; where were hanging an hundred little bells, framed of fine gold, in the days of Constantine, by a Fairy, brave and wise, for the purpose which ye have just heard me relate. If any one gently struck the horn with his finger, the hundred bells sounded so sweetly, that neither harp nor viol, nor the sports of a virgin, nor the syrens of the sea, could ever give such music." The author of this *Lai* is one Robert Bikez, as appears by the last lines ; in which the horn is said still to be seen at Cirencester. From this tale came Ariosto's *Enchanted Cup*<sup>1</sup> and Fontaine's *La Coupe Enchantee*. From the *Court Mantel*, a fiction of the same tendency, and which was common among the Welsh bards, Spenser borrowed the wonderful virtues and effects of his *Florimel's Girdle*.<sup>2</sup> Both stories are connected in an ancient ballad published by Percy.<sup>3</sup>

In the Digby manuscript, which contains *La Lai du Corn*, are many other curious chansons, romantic, allegorical, and legendary, both in old French and old English. I will here exhibit the rubrics, or titles, of the most remarkable pieces, and of such as seem most likely to throw light on the subjects or allusions of our ancient English poetry. *Le Romaunz Peres Aunfour* [Alfonse] coment il aprist et chastia son fils belement.<sup>4</sup>—*De un demi ami*.—*De un bon ami enter*.—*De un sage homme et de i fol*.—*De un gopil et de un mul*.—*De un roi et de un clerc*.—*De un homme et de une serpente et de un gopil*.—*De un roi et de un versifour*.—*De ii clercs escoliers*.—*De un prodome et de sa male femme*.—*Del engin de femme del nelons*.—*Del espee autre engin de femme*.—*De un roy et de un fableour*.—*De une veille et de une lisette*.—*De la gile de la per e el pin*.—*De un prodemme bone cointise* [Pr. "Un Espanyol ceo vy counter."].—*De ii menestreus* [i. e. Minstrels].—*De un roy et de Platoun*.—*De un vilein de i lou et de un gopil*.—*De un roy fol large*.—*De maimound mal esquier*.—*De Socrates, et de roi Alisaundre*.—*De roi Alisaundre et de i philosophe*.—*De un philosofel et dei alme*.—*Ci commence le romaunz de Enfer, Le Sounge Rauf de Hodenge de la voie denfer*. [Ad calc. "Rauf de Hodeng, saunz mensoung, Qu cest romaunz fist de sun songe."]<sup>5</sup>—*De un vallet qui soutint dames et damoisales*.—*De Romme et de Gerusalem*.—*La lais du corn*.—*Le fabel del gelous*.—*Ci comence la bertournee*.—*La vie de un vallet amerous*.—*De iii files . . .* [Pr. "Un rois estoit de graunt pouer."].—*How Jhesu Crist herewede belle, &c.*<sup>6</sup>—*Le xv singnes* [signes] *de domesday*. [Pr. "Fifteene toknen ich tellen may."].—*Ci comence la vie saint Eustace ci ont nom Placidas*.

<sup>1</sup> *Orl. Furios.* xlvi. 92.

<sup>2</sup> iv. 5, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. iii. p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> [See Notes to *Canterb. T. infir.*]

<sup>5</sup> [See Verdier, *Bibl. Fr.* ii. 394, v. 394. Paris, 1773.]

<sup>6</sup> [See vol. ii. sect. xxvii.]

[Pr. "Alle sat loves godes lore  
Olde and yonge lasse and more."] <sup>1</sup>

*Le diz de saint Bernard.* [Pr. "De blesinge of hevene kinge."]—*Vbi sunt ci ante nos fuerunt.* [In English.]—*Chaunçon de nostre dame.* [Pr. "Stond wel moder ounder rode."]—*Here beginneth the sawe of saint Bede preest* [Pr. "Holi gost di mixtee"].—*Coment le saunter notre dame fu primes cuntrone.* [Pr. "Luedi swete and milde."]—*Les . . . peines de enfen.* [Pr. "Oiez Seynours une demande."]—*Le regret de Maximian.* [Pr. "Herkeneð to mi ron."] <sup>2</sup>—*Ci comence le cument par entre le mavis et la ruffinole.* [Pr. "Somer is cumen wið love to tonne."] <sup>3</sup>—*Of the fox and of the wolf.* [Pr. "A vox gon out of de wode go."] <sup>4</sup>—*Hending the bende.*—*Les proverbes del vilain.*—*Les miracles de saint Nicholas.*—*Ragemon le bon.*—*Chancun del secle.* [In English.]—*Ci commence le fable et la courtise de dame siri . . .* [Pr. "As I com bi an waie."]—*Le noms de un leure Engleis* [i. e. The names of the Hare in English.]—*Ci comence la vie nostre dame.*—*Ci comence le doctrinal de enseignemens de curteisie.*—*Ci comence les Aves noustre dame.* *De ii chevalers torts ke plenderent aroune.*—*Bonne prieur a nostre seigneur Jhu Crist.*—*Ci comence le scrit de ii dames.*—*Hic incipit carmen inter corpus et animam.* [A Dialogue in English verse between a body laid on a bier and its soul. Pr. "Hon on . . . stude I stod an lutell scrit to here."]—*Ci comence la manere que le amour est pur assaier* [Pr. "Love is soft, love is swete, love is goed sware."]—*Chaunçon de noustre seigneur.* This manuscript seems to have been written about the year 1304. Ralph Houdain, whose poem called *Vision d'Enfer* it contains, wrote about the year 1230. [Several of these pieces have been printed.]

The word *Lai*, <sup>5</sup> I believe, was applied to any subject, and signified only the versification. Thus we have in the Bodleian library *La Lumere as Lais, par Mestre Pierre de Feccham.*

Verai deu omnipotent  
Kestes fin et commencement. <sup>6</sup>

It is a system of theology in this species of metre.

[The opinion advanced that the *Lays of Brittany* were written in French by bards of that province, was subsequently withdrawn.<sup>8</sup> Since then the poems of Marie have been published.<sup>9</sup> In addition to the twelve lays contained in the Harl. MS. (cited above),

<sup>1</sup> [See MS. Vernon, fol. 170, *ut supr.*]

<sup>2</sup> [MSS. Harl. 2253, f. 82.]

<sup>3</sup> [Rem. of the Early Pop. Poetry of Engl. i. 50.]

<sup>4</sup> [Ibid. i. 58.]

<sup>5</sup> [MSS. Harl. 2253, 89, fol. 125.]

<sup>6</sup> [Though the etymology of this word still remains inscrutable, its import is sufficiently manifest. And notwithstanding the versification of the several pieces bearing this title is nearly similar, the appellation appears rather to have been given to the matter of them than to the form in which they were composed. Feccham's poem is not a lay; and its title would be rendered in more modern orthography *La Lumiere aux Laiques*.—Price.]

<sup>7</sup> MSS. Bodl. 399.

<sup>8</sup> [All that follows was added by Price.]

<sup>9</sup> [Under the following title: *Poëses de Marie de France, ou Recueil de Lais, Fables et autres Productions de cette Femme célèbre*, par B. de Roquefort: Paris, 1820, 2 vols. 8vo.—Price. All the following extracts have been now collated with edit. 1820.]

M. Roquefort has inserted the *Lai de Gruelan*, given in Barbazan,<sup>1</sup> and the *Lai de l'Epine*, analysed by Le Grand.<sup>2</sup> We are not informed upon what authority these pieces are assigned to Marie, and it is probable that internal evidence alone has governed the editor in his decision. This is sufficiently striking to arrest the attention of a foreigner little acquainted with the niceties of the dialect in which they are written: but the fact, if such, ought to have been stated. On the authority of a line which does not occur in M. Roquefort's copy, M. de la Rue is disposed to ascribe the *Lai de l'Epine* to Guillaume-le-Normand. Such an omission would not be extraordinary in different manuscripts of the same work, whether the result of accident or design: but M. Roquefort mentions the circumstance as if he and his learned friend had both consulted the same document. If this be the case, it may be observed in corroboration of the objection raised by the latter to the claim of Guillaume, that the introduction to the Lay shows it to have formed one of a series, and that it was not an occasional or unconnected production:

Les Aventures trespassées,  
*Que di-versement ai contées,*  
 Nès' ai pas dites sans garant;  
 Les estores en traï avant;  
 Ki encore sont à Carlion,  
 Ens le monstier Saint Aaron,  
 Et en Bretaigne sont séuës.<sup>3</sup>

Ritson chose to deny the Armorican origin of these lays, and to infer in a long and specious note appended to the romance of *Emare*, that by the terms *Bretagne* and *Bretons*, so repeatedly mentioned in them, were intended "the country and people of Great Britain." To a part of this proposition Mr. Douce also seems to assent. The evident design of Mr. Ritson in this singular declaration, was to counteract a belief that there ever existed a mass of popular poetry in Brittany, recording either native traditions, or romantic history connected with the country from whence a portion of its inhabitants had migrated. It was of importance to disprove this fact, as it so powerfully militated against a favourite principle laid down in the *Dissertation on Romance*, that Geoffrey of Monmouth was the inventor of the Chronicle bearing his name—that the labours of this "impostour" became the storehouse of every after fabler on the British story—and that previous to its appearance the minstrels of France were as unacquainted with the exploits of Arthur and his followers as their Kalmuck brethren are at the present day. By investing Marie with the character of an original writer, the question of Geoffrey's veracity as to the means by which he obtained possession of his original, and his fidelity in executing a translation, became materially circumscribed; and the wild assertion of the editor of Pelloutier's *Dictionary*, that "the Armorican Britons have not cultivated poetry, and the language such as they speak it does not appear able to ply to the measure, or to the sweetness and to the harmony,

<sup>1</sup> Tom. iv. p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> Tom. iii. p. 244.

<sup>3</sup> V. 3.

*of verse,*" might then be said to stand unconfuted by opposing testimony. It will be needless to enter here upon either of these positions, which affect a subject to be discussed hereafter; and it will be sufficient to offer a general protest against the collateral evidence adduced by Mr. Ritson as to the meaning of the word "Breton" in several old French romances. There is but one passage out of many thus unnecessarily pressed into the service which contains anything more than a general reference to "Breton lays:"

Bons Lais de harpe vus apris,  
Lais Bretuns de nostre pais.

This is given from a fragment [formerly] in Mr. Douce's possession, [but now in the Bodleian,] and is cited in the language of *Tristan* to *Ysolt*. But Mr. Ritson has omitted to mention that it was uttered by *Tristan* in the presence of King *Mark*, when he had assumed the character of a madman, and was just arrived from a foreign country, of which the name is not specified. In all probability this country was Brittany, as the adventure seems the counterpart to his assumption of the beggar's garb in our English romance.

But admitting there was a slight discrepancy between the language of various romances as to the position of Bretagne, the question of *Marie*'s claim to the invention of these lays can neither be invalidated nor supported by it. Everyone is aware that there is no topic upon which the general language of romance is more unsettled and contradictory than its geographical details. The same liberties allowed in forming a genealogic line for the hero were extended to the fictitious scene of his actions, and countries the most remote were as readily transferred to a close and intimate proximity as their customs and languages were rendered identical. It would be of the essence of hypercriticism to censure this practice, which might be justified by the very charter-rolls of romance, as indeed it would be the height of absurdity to bring such details to the test of chorographic truth. The only object for consideration in applying the information thus conveyed must be the apparent intentions of the communicant, the probable extent of his personal knowledge or the accuracy of his avowed authorities, and how far, in the exercise of these resources, he is likely to have been swayed by the suggestions of his fancy or misdirected by his ignorance. It will be worse than useless to heap together, as Mr. Ritson has done, the whole mass of evidence to be gathered from every source, without regard to the varied character of the proofs thus collected, and by drawing a general inference, to assign the same authority to that which is confessedly fabulous as to that which may have been uttered in good faith. Every writer ought to be weighed in his own scale; and the only hope we can have of eliciting an author's intentions must be by resorting to his own declarations in illustration of his own peculiar meaning. Now, with respect to *Marie*, M. de la Rue<sup>1</sup> has already shown from the

---

<sup>1</sup> *Archæologia*, vol. xiii.

prologue to the poems, that she only aspired to the character of a translator. Her first intention was to have given a version in *Romance* of some Latin writer; but, finding the ground pre-occupied, she abandoned this design, and resolved on versifying the Breton tales which she had heard recited or found recorded.

Des Lais penfai k'oi aveie  
 Ne dutai pas, bien le faveie,  
 Ke pur remembrance les firent  
 Des aventures k'il oïrent—  
 Plusurs en ai oï conter,  
 Ne voil laisser nes' oblier;  
 Rimez en ai, è fait ditié  
 Soventes fiez en ai veillie.

This is frequently referred to in various parts of her poems, some of which were translated from written documents; others versified from recollection or oral communication; while the majority either acknowledge a Breton original or contain decided proofs of a connection with that country. Of this the evidence shall now be submitted.

The first poem in M. Roquefort's collection is the *Lai de Gugemer*, [of which the following are some of the opening lines:]<sup>1</sup>

Les cuntes ke jo fai verais  
 Dant li Bretun unt fait lor Lais,  
 Vus cunterai aslez brieftment  
 El cief de cest coumencement.  
 Sulunc la lettre è l'escriture,  
 Vus mufterai une aventure  
 Ki en Bretaigne la menus,  
 Avint al tens anciénur.

The *Lai d'Equitan*, who was "Sire de Nauns" (and of whose achievements "Li Bretun firent un Lai"), also commences with a direct testimony to the practice of recording deeds of chivalry and heroic adventure in that country:

Mut unt esté noble Barun,  
 Cil de Bretaine li Bretun;  
 Jadis sulcien par pruseie,  
 Par curteisie, è par nobleſce,  
 Des aventures qu'ils oicent,  
 Ki à plusur gent aveneient  
 Fère les Lais pur remembrance  
 Qu'en ne les meist en ubliance.  
 N'ent firent ceo oï cunter  
 Ki n'est fet mie à ublier.

The *Lai de Bisclaveret* is not specifically acknowledged as a Breton lay; but the scene is laid in "Bretaine," and the Breton term from which the story derives its name is cited in contradistinction to that current in the adjoining duchy of Normandy:

Bisclaveret ad nun en Bretan,  
 Garwall l'apelent li Norman.

<sup>1</sup> [Edit. 1820, i. 50.]

From the *Lai de Laufstic*<sup>1</sup> we obtain a similar testimony, with the additional declaration of its being a Breton lay :

Une aventure vus dirai  
*Dunt li Bretun firent un Lai;*  
 Laufstic ad nun ceo m'est avis,  
 Si l'apelent en lur pais;  
 Ceo est Reisun en Franceis,  
 E Nihtegale en dreit Engleis.

The scene is at St. Malo. Of the *Lai des deux Amans* and of the *Lai de Gruelan* it is said, “*Un Lai en firent li Bretun;*” of the *Lai de l’Epine*, “*Li Breton en firent un Lai;*” and of the *Lai d’Eliduc*,

*De un mut ancien Lai Bretun*  
*Le conte e tute la reisun,*  
*Vus dirai si cum jeo entent*  
*La vérité mun efficient.*

Of these four, the scene of the first is laid in Normandy, and of the rest in “*Bretaine*.” Of the remaining six, the *Lai du Frêne* places the action in “*Bretaine*,” without giving a more positive locality to the scene. It was a tale which Marie had heard recounted, but which she does not expressly claim as a “*Breton lay*.” The *Lai de Chevrefeuille* was translated from a written original :

*Plusfure le m’unt cunté e dit,*  
*E jeo l’ai trouvé en écrit.*

It contains no reference to “*Bretaine*” or the “*Bretons*,” and if we could forget Mr. Ritson’s arbitrary dogmas relative to the poverty of native genius both before and after the Conquest, might be supposed to owe its existence to some English poem now no more :

*Tristam ki bien savez harper,*  
*En avait fait un nuvel Lai*  
*Asez brèvement le numerai.*  
*Gotelef l’apelent en Engleis,*  
*Chevrefoil li nument en Franceis;*  
*Dit vus en ai la vérité*  
*Del’ Lai que j’ai ici cunté.*

There is reason to believe the *Lai de Milun* is not of Breton origin, as Marie deviates from her usual phraseology in announcing her authority.

*De lur amur e de lur bien*  
*Firent un Lai li Auncien;*  
*E jeo qui l’ai mis en écrit*  
*Al recunter mut me délit.*

The hero was born in South Wales :

<sup>1</sup> MM. de la Rue and Roquefort speak of an English version of this lay, and refer to the Cotton MS. Cal. A. ii. These gentlemen were either misled by a similarity in the title of the poem in question (Nightingale), or a manuscript note in the Museum copy of the catalogue of the Cotton MSS. The English poem is a mystic rhapsody on holy living, in which the nightingale and her plaintive song are declared to be typical of the doctrines and sufferings of Jesus Christ. [Sir F. Madden notes that it is a translation of John Hoveden’s *Meditatio*, &c., mentioned by Bp. Tanner (Bibl. art. *Hoveden*).]

Milun fu de Suht-wales nez :

a country also called Gales :

Jeo quid k'il est de Gales nez,  
E si est Milun apelez.

Mention is likewise made of Northumberland ; but [the younger] Milun's journey from England to Brittany is so circumstantially narrated, that every doubt as to the geographical position of the latter must be removed :

A Suht-hampagne vait passer,  
Cum il ainz pot se misst en mer,  
A Barbefluet (Barfleur. R.) est arrivez,  
Dreit en Brutaine est alez.

With reference to the same journey it is afterward said :

En Normendie est passez,  
Puis est desque Bretaine alez.

We also gather from the same lay the names by which the inhabitants of this and several adjoining countries were designated.

Al munt Seint-Michel s'assemblèrent,  
Normain, è Bretun i alèrent ;  
E li Flamenc, è li Franceis,  
Mès ni ot guère de Engleis.

In these specimens there is not the slightest evidence to prove, as asserted by Mr. Ritson, that by "Bretaine and Breton" were intended the country and people of Great Britain." On the contrary, whenever Marie enters into detail, we constantly find that by "Bretaine" she understood Brittany, and by "Breton" either the inhabitants or language of that province. No specific mention is made of England as a country, but the people and their dialect are alike called Engleis ; and the unequivocal appellation given to Wales precludes all possibility of supposing it was implied under the name of "Bretaine."

We now come to those Lays which Mr. Ritson has selected as containing the strongest confirmation of his opinion : "She must however [by Bretaine] mean Great Britain in the Lay of Lanval, where she mentions Kardoel, and that of Ywenec where she speaks of Carwent (*i. e.* Venta Silurum), which she places upon the Duglas instead of the Wye." Unhappily for the accuracy of this conclusion, the name of Bretaine never occurs throughout the *Lai de Lanval*. Marie certainly cites the Bretons as her authority for the narrative :

Od li s'en vait en Avalon,  
Ce nus racountent li Breton—

and calls Lanval a Breton name :

L'aventure d'un autre Lai  
Cum il avint vus cunterai ;  
Feit fu d'un mult riche vassal,  
En Bretun l'apelent Lanval.

But we have already seen that these terms can have no reference to Great Britain. The *Lai d'Ywenec* certainly favours Mr. Ritson's

opinion. It speaks of Caerwent (which, though the Roman Venta Silurum, is not Chepstow), and places it in Bretaigne :

En Bretaigne aveit jadis  
Uns riches Huns vielz et ancis ;  
De Caerwent fut avoez,  
Et du païs Sire clamez :  
La cité si est for Duglas—

A similiar combination occurs in the *Lai de l'Epine* :

Les estoires en traï avant ;  
Ki encore font à *Carlion*,  
Ens le monstier Saint-Aaron,  
Et en Bretaigne sont séues—

It would seem as if M. Roquefort had suspected that Marie in this passage was not alluding to Caerleon in Wales ; for he observes in a note : “ Il existoit en France une île Saint-Aaron. Elle a été renfermée dans la ville de Saint-Malo, au moyen d'une chaussée.” That there either was a Caerleon in Armorica, or what is far more probable, that Marie by her own powerful dictum transferred this town from the opposite side of the Channel, is evident from a passage in the *Lai de Chaitivel*. The events of this poem are stated to have transpired “ en Bretaine a Nantes :” but in the course of the narrative, without the slightest indication of a change of scene, we find the following date produced as the period when some of the transa&tions occurred :

A la feste Saint-Aaron,  
K'um célébroit a Carlion.

In this we have the clearest acknowledgment that, in the estimation of the writer, Nantz and Caerleon were towns of the same province ; and the previous testimony, with one exception, has declared that province to have been Bretagne in France. If, however, we accept Marie's representation of herself, and consider her as the translator of these poems, even this exception loses its force. For what could be more natural to suppose on her part, than that the scene of those adventures which formed the theme of Armorican song should be laid in Armorica ? or that even where her original made mention of Britain (Wales) as the theatre of the events it registered, she should through ignorance or design interpret the expression as referring to Brittany ? How much more probable is it, that either of these causes may have operated in producing the seeming contradiction between the *Lai d'Ywenec* and every other poem in the collection, than that Marie should have stultified herself by confounding two countries under one common name, for both of which on other occasions she had a distinctive appellation !

Of the interpretation given to her language or that of her contemporaries in this country, we have the most satisfactory evidence in Chaucer :

This olde gentil Bretons in here daies,  
Of divers aventures maden laies,  
Rimyden in her first Breton tonge ;—  
And on of hem have I in remembrance.—  
In Armorike, that called is Bretaigne, &c.

This may be contrasted with the conclusion of the *Lai d'Eliduc* :

Del' Aventure de ces treis,  
*Li auncien Bretus curteis*  
 Firent le Lai pur remembrer,  
 Que hum nel' deust pas oblier.

Even Mr. Ritson has admitted that the author of *Sir Orpheo* may “perhaps allude to the Armorican Britons,” when he says :

In Brytayn this layes arne ywrytt,  
 Furst yfounde and forthe ygete,  
 Of aventures that fillen by dayes  
 Wherof Brytons made her layes.

This is but a similar declaration to the language of Marie already cited from the *Lai d'Equitan*. Of the popularity of Orpheo's story in Armorica, we have a sufficient testimony in the *Lai de l'Epine* :

Le Lais escoutent d'Aielis,  
 Que uns Yrois doucement note  
 Mout le sonne ens fa rote.  
 Apries celi d'autre commenche,  
 Nus d'iaus ni noife ne ni tenche ;  
*Le Lai lor sone d'Orphéy*—

There is one peculiarity in the language of Marie relative to this subject which remains to be noticed. In the *Lai de Gruelan* she speaks of “ Bretaigne le menu,” an expression which occurs once again in the *Lai d'Eliduc*. But this refinement is not preserved throughout either of the poems : for in the first we have “ En Bretaigne est venue al port ;” and in the second, “ En Britaine ot un Chevalier,”—both with reference to the same country. Of a “ Bretaigne le grand” there is no trace in the whole collection : and if it be allowable to speculate upon a question so perfectly beyond the grasp of certainty, the utmost we can venture to infer will be, that though Marie may have found this distinctive nomenclature in her original text, she evidently neglected to observe it. We know from other sources, that in her time one of these countries was better known by its subdivision into the realms of Engleterre and Gales.

The second volume of M. Roquefort's edition of Marie's Poems contains her Fables. It is not intended to exhaust the reader's patience by entering into a discussion of the source from whence these fables were derived ; but as MM. de la Rue and Roquefort have attempted to claim her English original as the production of Henry the First, the subject cannot be wholly passed over in silence. These gentlemen do not seem to have known that a copy of the fables preserved at Oxford unites with the Harleian MS. 78, in attributing the English version to King Alfred :

Le reiz Alurez que mut l'ama  
 Le translata puis en Engleis.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Additional authorities on this subject, according to Sir F. Madden, are De la Rue's *Essais sur les Bardes, &c.*, iii. 47-100 ; Robert, *Fables Inédits, &c.*, i. clii.-lix. ; Roman du Renart, *Pref.* ; and Costello's *Spec. of the Early Poetry of France*, 43-9.]

This, supported as it is by the several disguises of the Pasquier and King's MSS. which read Auvert and Afferus, and the declaration of the Latin version,<sup>1</sup> that the same fables "were rendered into English by the orders of King Alfred," is more than sufficient to outweigh the testimony of the Harleian MS. 4333, which ascribes Marie's original to a King Henry. It also seems to have escaped the same diligent antiquaries, that the English language of Henry the First could not have differed materially from the Anglo-Saxon of Alfred; that any person, whether native or foreigner, who could master the one, would find no difficulty in comprehending the other; and consequently, that the argument raised on the imagined obscurities of the earlier copy is perfectly groundless. As to "the uncouth language of Robert of Gloucester," which is supposed to have cost Marie so much labour in acquiring, we must remember that however horrific this dialect may appear to modern Frenchmen,—printed as it is with a chevaux-de-frise of Saxon consonants,—its rude orthography only slightly varied from the language of general conversation in the chronicler's age. There could be no greater difficulty in learning to read or speak it, than is felt by a foreigner in modern English. In addition, there is reason to believe that, in Marie's time, some popular Anglo-Saxon subjects were rendered accessible to the modern reader by the same process which fitted the early poetry of Italy for general circulation at the present day. We know from certain testimony, that at a subsequent period *Brut* of Lagamon was made intelligible by a more recent version; and probability seems to favour the belief, that such was the case with the [*Proverbs of King Alfred*, printed in *Reliquiae Antiquae*.]<sup>2</sup> If these [*Proverbs or Maxims*] were registered by one of Alfred's contemporaries, or in the Anglo-Saxon language, they were doubtless written in the same metre as the translation appended to the edition of his *Boethius*, and would only have received the dress, in which they are exhibited by Wanley, about the time of Richard I. or John. Mr. Sharon Turner has produced this collection of apophthegms, as the first specimen of English *prose*; but they [scarcely, perhaps, fall under that head, and] are evidently written in the same mixed style of rhyme and alliterative metre, which we find in Lagamon. It is this circumstance which has suggested the possibility of their being recorded at an earlier date than the language in which they are written seems to indicate: but of course neither this, nor the claim of Alfred to the English version of *Aesop*, is insisted upon as demonstrable. The only object of these remarks is to impugn the evidence which MM. de la Rue and Roquefort consider as conclusive in favour of Henry I.

In closing this excursive note it may not be amiss to observe, that

<sup>1</sup> King's MS. 15, A. vii.

<sup>2</sup> [Vol. i. p. 170. From a MS. in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. The Cotton MS. perished in the fire. There is, however, a second copy in a MS. in Jesus College, Oxford, and this has also been printed in the *Reliquiae*. Sir F. Madden considers both MSS. of the 13th century.]

the Harl. MS. calls Marie's collection of fables *L'Ysopet, or the little Æsop*, of which a Dutch translation is said to have been made in the 13th century.<sup>1</sup> This title appears to have been given it by way of distinction from another collection of fables, probably made at an earlier period, and derived from a purer source. The latter is mentioned in the prologue to Merlant's *Spiegel Historiael*:

In *Cyrus* tiden was *Eſopus*  
De Favelare, wi leſſent dus,  
Die de favele conde maken  
Hoe beeften en vogle ſpraken,  
Hierute es gemaect *Aviaen*  
En andere boeken, ſonder waen,  
Die man *Eſopus* heet, bi namen.  
Waren oec die ſi bequamen  
Die hevet Calfſtaf en Noydekyn  
Ghedicht, en rime ſcone en fyn.

i. e. We read that Æſop, the fabler, who made fables how the birds and beasts converse, lived in the time of Cyrus. No doubt, Avicen (Avienus?) drew from it, and other books which people call Eſopus. Calfſtaf and Noydekyn put into fair rhymes those which they took pleasure in. [At the same time, Fauchet<sup>2</sup> mentions a moralization of Æſop, turned from English into French by Marie to gratify her lover, a certain Guillaume, who was not equally conversant, probably, with both tongues.]

### III.

## On the Introduction of Learning into England.

HE irruption of the northern nations into the western empire, about the beginning of the [fifth] century, forms one of the most interesting and important periods of modern history. Europe, on this great event, suffered the most memorable revolutions in its government and manners, and, from the most flourishing state of peace and civility, became on a sudden, and for the space of two centuries, the theatre of the most deplorable devastation and disorder. But among the disasters introduced by these irresistible barbarians the most calamitous seems to have been the destruction of those arts which the Romans still continued so successfully to cultivate in their capital, and which they had universally communicated to their con-

<sup>1</sup> See Van Wyn, *Historische Avondblonden*, p. 263.

<sup>2</sup> *Recueil*, edit. 1581, p. 163.

quered provinces. Towards the close of the fifth century very few traces of the Roman policy, jurisprudence, sciences and literature remained. Some faint sparks of knowledge were kept alive in the monasteries; and letters and the liberal arts were happily preserved from a total extinction during the confusions of the Gothic invaders by that slender degree of culture and protection which they received from the prelates of the church and the religious communities.

But notwithstanding the famous academy of Rome<sup>1</sup> with other literary seminaries had been destroyed by Alaric in the [fifth] century, yet Theodoric the second, king of the Ostrogoths, a pious and humane prince, restored in some degree the study of letters in that city, and encouraged the pursuits of those scholars who survived this great and general desolation of learning.<sup>2</sup> He adopted into his service Boethius, the most learned and almost only Latin philosopher of that period. Cassiodorus, another eminent Roman scholar, was Theodoric's grand secretary, who, retiring into a monastery in Calabria, passed his old age in collecting books and practising mechanical experiments.<sup>3</sup> He was the author of many valuable pieces which still remain.<sup>4</sup> He wrote with little elegance, but he was the first that ever digested a series of royal charts or instruments: a monument of singular utility to the historian, which has served to throw the most authentic illustration on the public transactions and legal constitutions of those times. Theodoric's patronage of learning is applauded by Claudian and Sidonius Apollinaris. Many other Gothic kings were equally attached to the works of peace, and were not less conspicuous for their justice, prudence and temperance, than for their fortitude and magnanimity. Some of them were diligent in collecting the scattered remains of the Roman institutes, and in constructing a regular code of jurisprudence.<sup>5</sup> It is highly probable that those Goths who became masters of Rome sooner acquired ideas of civility from the opportunity which that city above all others afforded

<sup>1</sup> Theodosius the younger, in the year 425, founded an academy at Constantinople, which he furnished with able professors of every science, intending it as a rival institution to that at Rome. Giannon. *Hist. Napl.* ii. ch. vi. sect. 1. A noble library had been established at Constantinople by Constantius and Valens before the year 380, the custody of which was committed to four Greek and three Latin antiquaries or curators. It contained sixty thousand volumes. Zonaras relates that, among other treasures in this library, there was a roll one hundred feet long, made of a dragon's gut or intestine, on which Homer's Iliad and Odyssey were written in golden letters. See *Bibl. Histor. Literar. Select. &c.*, 1754, p. 164, seq. Literature flourished in the eastern empire, while the western was depopulated by the Goths, and for many centuries afterwards. The Turks destroyed one hundred and twenty thousand volumes, I suppose in the imperial library, when they sacked Constantinople in the year 1454. Hod. *De Græc. Illustr.* ii. 1, p. 192. [It is believed that these figures represent a gross exaggeration.]

<sup>2</sup> He died A.D. 526. See Cassiodor. *Epiſt.* lib. i. 39. See also Func. *de inertis et decrep. Latin. Lingue Senectut.* cap. ii. p. 81. [The works of Cassiodorus were collected in 1729.]

<sup>3</sup> Func. *ut supr.* xiii. p. 471, xi. p. 595.

<sup>4</sup> Cave, Sæcul. Eutych. *Hist. Lit.* p. 391.

<sup>5</sup> Giannon. *Hist. Napl.* iii. c. 1.

them of seeing the felicities of polished life, of observing the conveniences arising from political economy, of mixing with characters respectable for prudence and learning, and of employing in their counsels men of superior wisdom, whose instruction and advice they found it their interest to follow. But perhaps these northern adventurers, at least their princes and leaders, were not, even at their first migrations into the south, so totally savage and uncivilised as we are commonly apt to suppose. Their enemies have been their historians, who naturally painted these violent disturbers of the general repose in the warmest colours. It is not easy to conceive that the success of their amazing enterprises was merely the effect of numbers and tumultuary depredation; nor can I be persuaded that the lasting and flourishing governments which they established in various parts of Europe could have been framed by brutal force alone and the blind efforts of unreflecting savages. Superior strength and courage must have contributed in a considerable degree to their rapid and extensive conquests; but at the same time such mighty achievements could not have been planned and executed without some extraordinary vigour of mind, uniform principles of conduct, and no common talents of political sagacity.

Although these commotions must have been particularly unfavourable to the more elegant literature, yet Latin poetry, from a concurrence of causes, had for some time begun to relapse into barbarism. From the growing increase of Christianity it was deprived of its old fabulous embellishments, and chiefly employed in composing ecclesiastical hymns. Amid these impediments, however, and the necessary degeneration of taste and style, a few poets supported the character of the Roman muse with tolerable dignity during the decline of the Roman empire. These were Ausonius, Paulinus, Sidonius, Sedulius, Arator, Juvencus, Prosper, and Fortunatus. With the last, who flourished at the beginning of the sixth century, and was bishop of Poitiers, the Roman poetry is supposed to have expired.

In the sixth century Europe began to recover some degree of tranquillity. Many barbarous countries during this period, particularly the inhabitants of Germany, of Friesland, and other northern nations, were converted to the Christian faith.<sup>1</sup> The religious controversies which at this time divided the Greek and Latin churches roused the minds of men to literary enquiries. These disputes in some measure called forth abilities which otherwise would have been unknown and unemployed, and together with the subtleties of argumentation insensibly taught the graces of style and the habits of composition. Many of the popes were persons of distinguished talents, and promoted useful knowledge no less by example than authority. Political union was by degrees established, and regular systems of government, which alone can ensure personal security, arose in the various provinces of Europe occupied by the Gothic

<sup>1</sup> *Cave. Sæcul. Monach. p. 440.*

tribes. The Saxons had taken possession of Britain; the Franks became masters of Gaul, the Huns of Pannonia, the Goths of Spain, and the Lombards of Italy. Hence leisure and repose diffused a mildness of manners, and introduced the arts of peace, and, awaking the human mind to a consciousness of its powers, directed its faculties to their proper objects.

In the mean time, no small obstruction to the propagation, or rather the revival, of letters, was the paucity of valuable books. The libraries, particularly those of Italy which abounded in numerous and inestimable treasures of literature, were every where destroyed by the precipitate rage and undistinguishing violence of the northern armies. Towards the close of the seventh century, even in the papal library at Rome, the number of books was so inconsiderable, that Pope Saint Martin requested Sanctamand, bishop of Maestricht, if possible, to supply this defect from the remotest parts of Germany.<sup>1</sup> In the year 855, Luper, abbot of Ferrieres in France, sent two of his monks to Pope Benedict III., to beg a copy of *Cicero de Oratore*, and of Quintilian's *Institutes*,<sup>2</sup> and some other books: "for, says the abbot, although we have part of these books, yet there is

<sup>1</sup> Concil. tom. xv. p. 285, ed. Paris, 1641.

<sup>2</sup> There are very early manuscripts of Quintilian's *Institutes*, as we shall see below; and he appears to have been a favourite author with some writers of the middle ages. He is quoted by John of Salisbury, a writer of the eleventh century. *Polycrat.* vii. 14; iii. 7; x. 1, &c. And by Vincent of Beauvais, a writer of the thirteenth. *Specul. Hif.* x. 11; ix. 125. His declinations are said to have been abridged by our countryman Adelardus Bathoniensis, and dedicated to the Bishop of Bayeaux, about the year 1130. See *Catal. Bibl. Leidens*, p. 381, A.D. 1716. Poggio Florentinus [Poggio Bracciolini], an eminent restorer of classical literature, says that in the year 1446 he found a much more correct copy of Quintilian's *Institutes* than had been yet seen in Italy, almost perishing at the bottom of a dark neglected tower of the monastery of Saint Gall, in France, together with the three first books and half the fourth of Valerius Flaccus's *Argonautics*, and Asconius Pedianus's comment on eight orations of Tully. See Poggio, *Opp.* p. 309. Amst. 1720, 8vo. The very copy of Quintilian, found by Poggio, is said to have been in Lord Sunderland's noble library at Blenheim. Poggio, in his dialogue *De Infelicitate Principum*, says of himself that he travelled all over Germany in search of books. It is certain that by his means Quintilian, Tertullian, Asconius Pedianus, Lucretius, Sallust, Silius Italicus, Columella, Manilius, Tully's *Orations*, Ammianus Marcellinus, Valerius Flaccus, and some of the Latin grammarians and other ancient authors, were recovered from oblivion, and brought into general notice by being printed in the fifteenth century. Fr. Barbarus *Collaudat. ad Pogg. dat. Venet.* 1417, 7 Jul. See also *Giornale de Letterati d'Italia*, tom. ix. p. 178; x. p. 417. And Aretin, *Epiſt. lib. iv. p. 160*. Colomesius affirms that Silius Italicus is one of the classics discovered by Poggio in the tower of the monastery of Saint Gall. *Ad Gyrard. de Poet. Dial.* iv. p. 240. But Philippo Rosso, in his *Ritratto di Roma antica*, mentions a very antient manuscript of this poet brought from Spain into the Vatican, having a picture of Hannibal, *il quale hoggi si ritrova nella predetta libraria*, p. 83. [From the following passage in one of Poggio's letters to Niccolò Niccoli, it appears that he had also travelled into England for the same purpose: "Mittas ad me oro Bucolicam Calphurnii et portiunculam Petronii quas misi tibi ex Britannia." See Ambr. Traversari *Lat. Epiſt. &c. i. Pref.* p. 49. It is probable, that upon this occasion he met with the copy of Quintilian above mentioned.—Douce.]

no whole or complete copy of them in all France."<sup>1</sup> Albert, abbot of Gemblours, who with incredible labour and immense expense had collected an hundred volumes on theological and fifty on profane subjects, imagined he had formed a splendid library.<sup>2</sup> About the year 790, Charlemagne granted an unlimited right<sup>3</sup> of hunting to the abbot and monks of Sithiu, for making their gloves and girdles of the skins of the deer they killed, and covers for their books.<sup>4</sup> We may imagine that these religious were more fond of hunting than reading.<sup>5</sup> It is certain that they were obliged to hunt before they could read: and at least it is probable that, under these circumstances and of such materials, they did not manufacture many volumes. At the beginning of the tenth century books were so scarce in Spain, that one and the same copy of the Bible, Saint Jerom's *Epistles*, and some volumes of ecclesiastical offices and martyrologies, often served different monasteries.<sup>6</sup> Among the constitutions given to the monks of England by Archbishop Lanfranc in the year 1072, the following injunction occurs. At the beginning of Lent, the librarian is ordered to deliver a book to each of the religious: a whole year was allowed for the perusal of this book: and at the returning Lent, those monks, who had neglected to read the books they had respectively received, are commanded to prostrate themselves before the abbot, and to supplicate his indulgence.<sup>7</sup> This regulation was partly occasioned by the low state of literature which Lanfranc found in the English monasteries. But at the same

<sup>1</sup> Murator, *Antiq. Ital.* iii. p. 835. And Lup. *Ep. ad Baron.* ad. an. 856, n. 8, 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Fleury, *Hist. Eccl.* 1. lviii. c. 52.

<sup>3</sup> [This permission was not granted until after much entreaty on the part of the monks, and an assurance that the flesh of the deer would be the means of re-establishing the health of their sick brethren as well as for the other reasons above mentioned. That monks were addicted to the pleasure of the chase, appears from Chaucer's description of the monk in his *Canterbury Tales*.—Douce.]

<sup>4</sup> Mabillon, *De Re Dipl.* p. 611.

<sup>5</sup> [Hunting appears to have been expressly forbidden the religious of all denominations, as a profane amusement altogether incompatible with their profession. They obtained, however, this indulgence under certain restrictions, particularly set forth in their charters. It was a privilege allowed even to nuns. See more on this subject in M. le Grand's *Vie privée des Français*, tom. i. p. 323. By the laws of Eadgar, priests were prohibited from hunting, hawking, and drinking: "Ducemus etiam ut sacerdos non sit venator, neque accipitriarius, neque potator. Sed incumbat libris suis sicut ordinem ipsius decet." Wilkins's *Leges Anglo-Saxon.* p. 86.—Douce. The Latin version which is here followed, is as usual inaccurate. The original text forbids a less disgraceful indulgence than "compotation," and contains a ludicrous play of words, hardly admissible in our present legal enactments: ne tæfriere, ac plegge on his bocum swa his hade gebirath: i. e. nor tabler (player at tables), but let him *ply* his books as becomes his *condition*.—Price. The words in italics were corrected by Mr. Garnett.]

<sup>6</sup> Fleury, *ubi supr.* 1, liv. c. 54. See other instances in *Hist. Lit. Fr.* par Rel. Benedict. vii. 3.

<sup>7</sup> "Unusquisque reddat librum qui ad legendum sibi alio anno fuerat commendatus: et qui cognoverat se non legisse librum quem recepit, prostratus culpam dicat, et indulgentiam petat. Iterum librorum custos unicuique fratrum alium librum tribuat ad legendum." Wilkins' *Concil.* i. 332. See also the order of the Provincial chapter, *De occupatione monachorum*, Reyner, Append. p. 129.

time it was a matter of necessity, and is in great measure to be referred to the scarcity of copies of useful and suitable authors. In an inventory of the goods of John de Pontifara, bishop of Winchester, contained in his capital palace of Wulvesey, all the books which appear are nothing more than “*Septendecim pecie librorum de diversis Sciencis.*”<sup>1</sup> This was in the year 1294. The same prelate, in the year 1299, borrows of his cathedral convent of St. Swithin at Winchester, *Bibliam bene glossatam*, that is, the Bible with marginal annotations, in two large folio volumes: but gives a bond for due return of the loan, drawn up with great solemnity.<sup>2</sup> This Bible had been bequeathed to the convent the same year by Pontifara’s predecessor, Bishop Nicholas of Ely: and in consideration of so important a bequest, that is, “*pro bona Biblia dicti episcopi bene glossata,*” and one hundred marks in money, the monks founded a daily mass for the soul of the donor.<sup>3</sup> When a single book was bequeathed to a friend or relation, it was seldom without many restrictions and stipulations.<sup>4</sup> If any person gave a book to a religious house, he believed that so valuable a donation merited eternal salvation, and he offered it on the altar with great ceremony. The most formidable anathemas were pre-emptorily denounced against those who should dare to alienate a book presented to the cloister or library of a religious house. The prior and convent of Rochester declare, that they will every year pronounce the irrevocable sentence of damnation on him who shall purloin or conceal a Latin translation of Aristotle’s *Physics*, or even obliterate the title.<sup>5</sup> Sometimes a book was given to a monastery on condition that the donor should have the use of it during his life: and sometimes to a private person, with the reservation that he who receives it should pray for the soul of his benefactor.<sup>6</sup> The gift of a book to Lincoln cathedral by Bishop

<sup>1</sup> *Regist. Pontif. f. 126, MS.*

<sup>2</sup> “*Omnibus Christi fidelibus presentes literas visuris vel inspecturis, Johannes, Dei gratia Wynton episcopus, salutem in domino. Noveritis nos ex commodato recepisse a dilectis filiis nostris Priore et conventu ecclesie nostre Wynton unam Bibliam in duobus voluminibus bene glossatam, que aliquando fuit bone memorie domini Nicolai Wynton episcopi predecessoris nostri, termino perpetuo seu quantum nobis placuerit, inspicientam, tenendam, et habendam. Ad cuius Restitucionem eisdem fideliter et sine dolo faciendam, obligamus nos per presentes: quam si in vita nostra non restituerimus eisdem, obligamus executores nostros, et omnia bona nostra mobilia et immobilia, ecclesiastica et mundana, cohercioni et districtioni cuiuscunque judicis ecclesiastici et secularis quem predictus Prior et conventus duxerit eligendum, quod possint eosdem executores per omnitudinem districtionem compellere, quounque dicta Biblia dictis filiis et fratribus sit restituta. In cuius rei testimonium, sigillum, &c. Dat. apud Wulveseye, vi. Kal. Maii, anno 1299.*” *Regist. Pontif. ut supr. f. 193.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid. f. 19.*

<sup>4</sup> As thus: “*Do Henrico Morie scolari meo, si contingat eum presbyterari: aliter erit liber domini Johannis Sory, sic quod non vendatur, sed transeat inter cognatos meos, si fuerint aliqui inventi: sin autem, ab uno presbytero ad alium.*” Written at the end of Latin *Homilies on the Canticles*, MSS. Reg. 5, C. iii. 24, Brit. Mus.

<sup>5</sup> MSS. Reg. 12 G. ii.

<sup>6</sup> [At the end of a MS. of the *Golden Legend* in [the Douce collection] is the

Repingdon, in the year 1422, occurs in this form and under these curious circumstances. The memorial is written in Latin with the bishop's own hand (which I will give in English) at the beginning of Peter's *Breviary of the Bible*. "I Philip of Repyndon, late bishop of Lincoln, give this book called Peter de Aureolis to the new library to be built within the church of Lincoln: reserving the use and possession of it to Richard Fryesby, clerk, canon and prebendary of Miltoun, in fee and to the term of his life: and afterwards to be given up and restored to the said library, or the keepers of the same for the time being, faithfully and without delay. Written with my own hand, A.D. 1422."<sup>1</sup> When a book was bought, the affair was of so much importance, that it was customary to assemble persons of consequence and character, and to make a formal record that they were present on this occasion. Among the royal manuscripts, in the book of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, an archdeacon of Lincoln has left this entry.<sup>2</sup> "This book of the *Sentences* belongs to master Roger, archdeacon of Lincoln, which he bought of Geoffrey the chaplain, brother of Henry vicar of North Elkington, in the presence of master Robert de Lee, master John of Lirling, Richard of Luda, clerk, Richard the almoner, the said Henry the vicar and his clerk, and others: and the said archdeacon gave the said book to God and saint Oswald, and to Peter [de Barton abbot], and the convent of Barden[ey]."<sup>3</sup> The disputed property of a book often occasioned the most violent altercations. Many claims appear to have been made to a manuscript of Matthew Paris, belonging to the last-mentioned library: in which John Russell, bishop of Lincoln, thus conditionally defends or explains his right of possession. "If this book can be proved to be or to have been the property of the exempt monastery of Saint Alban in the diocese of Lincoln, I declare this to be my mind, that in that case I use it at present as a loan under favour of those monks who belong to the said monastery. Otherwise, according to the condition under which this book came into my possession, I will that it shall belong to the college of the blessed [Mary of Winchester] at Oxford, of the foundation of William Wykham. Written with my own hand at Birkdale. 1 Jun. A.D. 1488. Jo. Lincoln. Whoever shall obliterate or destroy this writing, let him be anathema."<sup>4</sup> About the year 1225, Roger

following bequest: "Be hit remembryd that John Burton citizen and mercer of London past oute of this lyfe the xx day of Novemb'. the yere of oure Lorde Mill'. ccccix. and the yere of kyng Henry the Sixte after the conquest xxxix. And the said John Burton bequethe to dame Kateryne Burton his douȝter, a boke callyd *Legenda Sanctorum*, the seyde Kateryne to have hit and to occupye to hir owne use and at hir owne liberte durynge hir lyfe, and after hir decease to remayne to the prioresse and the convent of Halywelle for evermore, they to pray for the saide John Burton and John his wife and alle crystene soyles. And who that lettithe the execucion of this bequest he the lawe standeth."—*Park.*]

<sup>1</sup> MSS. Reg. 8 G. iii. fol. Brit. Mus.

<sup>2</sup> It is in Latin.

<sup>3</sup> 9 B. ix. 1. [Sir F. Madden's corrections.]

<sup>4</sup> Written in Latin. Cod. MSS. Reg. 14 c. vii. fol. In this manuscript is written by Matthew Paris in his own hand, "Hunc Librum dedit frater Matthaeus

de Insula, dean of York, gave several Latin bibles to the University of Oxford, with a condition that the students who perused them should deposit a cautionary pledge.<sup>1</sup> The library of that university, before the year 1300, consisted only of a few tracts, chained or kept in chests in the choir of St. Mary's Church.<sup>2</sup> In the year 1327, the scholars and citizens of Oxford assaulted and entirely pillaged the opulent Benedictine abbey of the neighbouring town of Abingdon. Among the books they found there, were one hundred psalters, as many grayles, and forty missals, which undoubtedly belonged to the choir of the church: but besides these, there were only twenty-two codices, which I interpret books on common subjects.<sup>3</sup> The inven-

Parisensis"—Perhaps "deo et ecclesiae S. Albani," since erased. [See on this Note of Bishop Russell Sir F. Madden's Preface to the *Historia Anglorum* of Matthew Paris, 1866, p. xl.—M.]

<sup>1</sup> Wood, *Hist. Antiq. Univ. Oxon.* ii. 48, col. 1. It was common to lend money on the deposit of a book. There were public chests in the universities, and perhaps some other places for receiving the books so deposited; many of which still remain with an insertion in the blank pages, containing the conditions of the pledge. I will throw together a few instances in this note. In Peter Comestor's *Scholastical History*, "Cautio Thomæ Wybourn excepta in Cista de Chichele, A. D. 1468, 20 die mens. Augusti. Et est liber M. Petri, &c. Et jacet pro xxvi s. viii d." Mus. Brit. MSS. Reg. 2 c. fol. i. In a Psalter cum glossa, "A. D. 1326, Iste Liber impignoratur Mag. Jacobo de Hispania canonico S. Pauli London, per fratrem Willielmum de Rokele de ordine et conventu Prædicatorum Londonie, pro xx s. quem idem frater Willielmus recepit mutuo de predicto Jacobo ad opus predicti conventus, solvendos in quindena S. Michaelis proxime ventura. *Condonatur quia pauper.*" *Ibid.* 3 E. vii. fol. In Bernard's *Homilies on the Canticles*, "Cautio Thome Myllyng imposita cista de Rodbury, 10 die Decemb. A. D. 1491. Et jacet pro xx s." *Ibid.* 6 c. ix. These pledges, among other particulars, show the prices of books in the middle ages, a topic which I shall touch upon below. [Sir F. Madden says, that there are similar instances in Raines's *Cat. of the Durham Cath. MSS.*]

<sup>2</sup> *Regist. Univ. Oxon.* c. 64, a.

<sup>3</sup> Wood, *Hist.* ut supr. i. 163, col. 1. Leland mentions this library, but it is just before the dissolution of the monastery. "Cum excuterem pulvrem et blattas Abbandunensis bibliothecæ." *Script. Brit.* p. 238. See also J. Twyne, *Comm. de Reb. Albion. lib. ii. p. 130, 1590.* I have mentioned the libraries of many monasteries below. See alio what is said of the libraries of the Mendicant Friars, sect. ix. p. 128, *infra*. That of Grey Friars in London was filled with books at the cost of five hundred and fifty-six pounds in the year 1432. Leland, *Coll. i. 109.* In the year 1482, the library of the Abbey of Leicester contained eight large stalls which were filled with books. Gul. Chartye, *Registr. Libror. et Jocal. omnium in monast. S. Mar. de pratis prope Lecestriam MSS. Bibl. Bodl. Laud. I. 75, fol. membr.* See f. 139. There is an account of the library of Dover Priory, [compiled, says Sir F. Madden, in 1389,] *MSS. Bibl. Bodl. Arch. B. 24.* Leland says, that the library of Norwich Priory was "bonis refertissima libriss." *Script. Brit.* p. 247. See also Leland's account of St. Austin's library at Canterbury, *ibid.* p. 299. Concerning which, compare *Liber Thome Sprotti de libraria S. Augustini Cantuarie*, *MSS. C. C. C. Oxon. 125.* And *Bibl. Cotton. Brit. Mus. Jul. C. vi. 4.* And Leland, *Coll. iii. 10, 120.* Leland, who was librarian to Henry VIII. removed a large quantity of valuable manuscripts from St. Austin's, Canterbury, and from other monasteries at the dissolution, to that king's library at Westminster. See *Script. Brit. Etelstanus.* And *MSS. Reg. 1 A. xviii.* For the sake of connection I will observe that, among our cathedral libraries of secular canons, that of the church of Wells was most magnificent: it was built about the year 1420, and contained twenty-five windows on either side (Leland, *Coll. i. p. 109*), in which

tion of paper, at the close of the eleventh century,<sup>1</sup> [does not seem to have immediately] contributed to multiply manuscripts, and consequently to facilitate knowledge, [and] even so late as the reign of our Henry the Sixth, I have discovered the following remarkable instance of the inconveniences and impediments to study, which must have been produced by a scarcity of books. It is in the statutes of St. Mary's College at Oxford, founded as a seminary to Oseney Abbey in the year 1446. "Let no scholar occupy a book in the library above one hour, or two hours at most; so that others shall be hindered from the use of the same."<sup>2</sup> The famous library established in the University of Oxford by that magnificent patron of literature Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, contained only six hundred volumes.<sup>3</sup> [St. Mark's Library at Venice contained, it is believed, in the middle of the fourteenth century no books except the few presented to it by Petrarch, among which we find the *Terapeutica* of Galen, a Latin poem by Pace Del Friuli on the *Marian Games*, a French missal of the twelfth century, a copy of Dante, and one of Quintilian *De Institutione Oratoriâ*.] About the commencement of the fourteenth century, there were only four classics in the royal library at Paris. These were, one copy of Cicero, Ovid, Lucan and Boethius. The rest were chiefly books of devotion, which included but few of the fathers: many treatises of astrology, geomancy, chiromancy and medicine, originally written in Arabic, and translated into Latin or French: pandects, chronicles and romances. This collection was principally made by Charles V., who began his reign in 1365. This monarch was passionately fond of reading, and it was the fashion to send him presents of books from every part of the kingdom of France. These he ordered to be elegantly transcribed, and richly illuminated; and he placed them in a tower of the Louvre, thence called "la tour de la libraire." The whole consisted of nine hundred volumes. They were de-

---

state, I believe, it continues at present. Nor is it quite foreign to the subject of this note to add, that King Henry VI. intended a library at Eton College, fifty-two feet long, and twenty-four broad: and another at King's College in Cambridge of the same breadth, but one hundred and two feet in length. Ex Testam. dat. xii. Mar. 1447. [See *Retrospective Review*, 2nd series, vol. ii. p. 136, for a highly curious catalogue of the library of the Earl of Kildare in 1526, and also Mr. Halliwell's *Ancient Inventories*, 1854, p. 82; also, *History of the Venetian Republic*, vol. iii. pp. 210-12.]

<sup>1</sup> [There are no paper manuscripts of books known to have been written in Western Europe before the fourteenth century. See what I said about the knowledge of paper among the Anglo-Saxons in one of the numbers of the *Athenaeum* this spring (1870)—*Wright*. Paper was not used at that time, but *papyrus*. The statement, however, is erroneous, grounded on a MS. of Homer, now in Corpus Chr. Coll. Camb. No. 81, which is of the fifteenth century. See Nasmyth's *Cat.* p. 57.—M.]

<sup>2</sup> "Nullus occupet unum librum, vel occupari faciat, ultra unam horam et duas ad majus: sic quod cæteri retrahantur a visu et studio ejusdem." *Statut. Coll. S. Marie pro Oseney. De Libraria*, f. 21. *MSS. Rawlins. Bibl. Bodl. Oxon.*

<sup>3</sup> Wood, *ubi supr.* ii. 49, col. ii. It was not opened till the year 1480. *Ibid.* p. 50, col. i.

posited in three chambers which, on this occasion, were wainscotted with Irish oak, and ceiled with cypres curiously carved. The windows were of painted glass, fenced with iron bars and copper wire. The English became masters of Paris in the year 1425. On which event the Duke of Bedford, regent of France, sent his whole library, then consisting of only eight hundred and fifty-three volumes, and valued at two thousand two hundred and twenty-three livres, into England.<sup>1</sup> Even so late as the year 1471, when Louis XI. of France borrowed the works of the Arabian physician Rhafis from the faculty of medicine at Paris, he not only deposited by way of pledge a quantity of valuable plate, but was obliged to procure a nobleman to join with him as surety in a deed,<sup>2</sup> by which he bound himself to return it under a considerable forfeiture.<sup>3</sup>

[But the zeal for collecting books had made great progress in the meantime, in Italy, where several fine libraries were formed in the fifteenth century. In 1468, the collection made by Cardinal Bessarion at a cost of 30,000 sequins passed by gift to Venice. To these were added in 1506 the Grimani library. Among the MSS. accumulated by Aurispa, the Venetian De Bure, were copies of Plato, Procopius, and Callimachus.]

The excessive prices of books in the middle ages afford numerous and curious proofs. I will mention a few only. In the year 1174, Walter, prior of St. Swithin's at Winchester, afterwards elected abbot of Westminster, a writer in Latin of the lives of the bishops who were his patrons,<sup>4</sup> purchased of the canons of Dorchester in Oxfordshire Bede's *Homilies* and Saint Austin's *Psalter* for twelve measures of barley and a pall, on which was embroidered in silver the history of Saint Birinus converting a Saxon king.<sup>5</sup>

Birinus, who came into England from Rome about the year 630, with a design of converting the Saxons, brought with him one Benedict, a monk of Cassino, whom he placed over the monks or church of Winchester.

The author of the life of Birinus says, he was commanded to write by Peter, probably Peter de Rupibus, bishop of Winchester. Perhaps he is Michael Blaunpayne. Alexander Esseby wrote lives of saints in Latin verse.

The history of St. Birinus, with that of St. Swithin and others, is

<sup>1</sup> See M. Boivin, *Mem. Lit.* ii. p. 747, 4to. He says, that the regent presented to his brother-in-law Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, a rich copy of a translation of Livy into French, which had been presented to the King of France.

<sup>2</sup> See [Richard de] Bury's *Philobiblon*, mentioned at large below. "De modo communicandi studentibus libros nostros," cap. xix.

<sup>3</sup> Robertson's *Hist. Charles V.* vol. i. p. 281, edit. 8vo.

<sup>4</sup> William Giffard and Henry de Blois, bishops of Winchester.

<sup>5</sup> *Registr. Priorat. S. Swithin. Winton.* ut supr. MS. quatern. . . . "Pro duodecim mens. (or mod.) ordei, et una palla brusdata in argento cum historia sancti Birini convertentis ad fidem Kynegylsum regem Gewyseorum: necnon Oswaldi regis Northumbranorum fuscipientis de fonte Kynegylsum." *Gewyseorum* is the West Saxons.

represented on the ancient font of Norman workmanship in Winchester cathedral : on the windows of the abbey-church of Dorchester near Oxford : and in the western front and windows of Lincoln cathedral. With all which churches Birinus was connected. He was buried in that of Dorchester.<sup>1</sup> And in Bever's manuscript *Chronicle* or his *Continuator*, cited below, it is said that a marble cenotaph of marvellous sculpture was constructed over his grave in Dorchester church about the year 1320. I find no mention of this monument in any other writer.<sup>2</sup>

[To this account may be added what has been said on the same subject in a letter to Mr. Gough, May 28, 1785 : "I have examined the ancient Saxon Font at Winchester, but can send no satisfactory account of the sculptures. I have said somewhere in the *History of English Poetry*, that it exhibits the history of Birinus as at Dorchester in Oxfordshire. There I find the following imageries, either in painted glass, or in the masonry of the windows: I. Window N. aisle from the West. The deck of a ship, with a head crowned, i. e. Birinus sailing to England. II. Birinus baptizing Kingilse, king of the West Saxons: Birinus, in a green vestment : Oswald, king of Northumberland, his godfather, with attendants. V [III.] Under a Bishop, *Sanct. Beruins*, i. e. Birinus, near him the figure of Honorius the Pope, who sent him to convert the West Saxons. These are in the glass: I. A figure with long hair and a staff. II. A figure sitting, blessing a female figure, kneeling before it. Perhaps Birinus blessing the daughter of Kingilse, before he marries her to Oswald. On the left: III. A martyrdom, perhaps the decollation of Birinus.

..... Birinus's legend should be inspected. .... you will find Birinus's legend in *Surius Vit. Sanctor.* vol. iv. p. 121, under *December*, viz. December iii. I find nothing in St. Swithin's legend that in the least agrees with the Font"]

Among the royal manuscripts in the British Museum there is Comestor's *Scholastic History* in French which, as it is recorded in a blank page at the beginning, was taken from the King of France at the battle of Poitiers : and being purchased by William Montacute, earl of Salisbury, for one hundred marcs, was ordered to be sold by the last will of his Countess Elizabeth for forty livres.<sup>3</sup> About the year 1400, a copy of John of Meun's *Roman de la Rose* was sold before the palace-gate at Paris for forty crowns or thirty three pounds six and sixpence.<sup>4</sup> But in pursuit of these anecdotes, I am

<sup>1</sup> Whart. *Angl. Sacr.* i. 190.

<sup>2</sup> Bever, *Chron. MSS.* Coll. Trin. Oxon. Num. x. f. 66.

<sup>3</sup> MSS. 19 D ii. *La Bible Historiale, ou Les Histories escolastiques.* The transcript is of the fourteenth century. This is the entry, "Cest livre fust pris oue le roy de France a la bataille de Peyters: et le bon conte de Saresbirs William Montagu la achata pur cent mars, et le dona a sa compaigne Elizabeth la bone countesse, que dieux affoile.—Le quale lyvre le dite countesse assigna a ses executours de le rendre pur xl. livres."

<sup>4</sup> It belonged to Ames, author of the *Typographical Antiquities*. In a blank leaf was written, "Cest lyvir cost a palas du Parys quarante corones d'or sans mentir." I have observed in another place that, in the year 1430, *Nicholas de*

imperceptibly seduced into later periods, or rather am deviating from my subject.

After the calamities which the state of literature sustained in consequence of the incursions of the northern nations, the first restorers of the ancient philosophical sciences in Europe, the study of which, by opening the faculties and extending the views of mankind, gradually led the way to other parts of learning, were the Arabians. In the beginning of the eighth century, this wonderful people, equally famous for their conquests and their love of letters, in ravaging the Asiatic provinces, found many Greek books which they read with infinite avidity: and such was the gratification they received from this fortunate acquisition, and so powerfully their curiosity was excited to make further discoveries in this new field of knowledge, that they requested their caliphs to procure from the emperor at Constantinople the best Greek writers. These they carefully translated into Arabic.<sup>1</sup> But every part of the Grecian literature did not equally gratify their taste. The Greek poetry they rejected, because it inculcated polytheism and idolatry, which were inconsistent with their religion. Or perhaps it was too cold and too correct for their extravagant and romantic conceptions.<sup>2</sup> Of the Greek history they made no use, because it recorded events which preceded their prophet Mahomet. Accustomed to a despotic empire, they neglected the political systems of the Greeks, which taught republican freedom. For the same reasons they despised the

---

*Lyra* was transcribed at the expense of one hundred marcs.—Sect. ix. p. 127, *infra*. I add here the valuation of books bequeathed to Merton College at Oxford, before the year 1300:—*A Scholastic History*, 20s.; *A Concordantia*, 10s.; The four greater Prophets, with glosses, 5s.; *Liber Anselmi cum questionibus Thome de Malo*, 12s.; *Quodlibetæ H. Gandavensis et S. Thomas Aquinatis*, 10s.; *A Psalter with glosses*, 10s.; *Saint Austin on Genesis*, 10s.—MS. *Hist. of Merton College*, by A. Wood, Bibl. Bodl. Cod. Rawlins. I could add a variety of other instances. The curious reader who seeks further information on this small yet not unentertaining branch of literary history, is referred to Gabr. Naud. *Addit. à l'Hist. de Louys XI. par Comines*, edit. Fresn. tom. iv. 281, &c.

<sup>1</sup> See Abulfarag. *per Pocock, Dynast.* p. 160. Greek was a familiar language to the Arabians. The accompts of the Caliph's treasury were always written in Greek till the year of Christ 715. They were then ordered to be drawn in Arabic. Many proofs of this might be mentioned. Greek was a familiar language in Mahomet's household. Zaid, one of Mahomet's secretaries, to whom he dictated the Koran, was a perfect master of Greek.—Sale's *Prelim. Disc.* pp. 144, 145. The Arabic gold coins were always inscribed with Greek legends till about the year 700.

<sup>2</sup> Yet it appears from many of their fictions, that some of the Greek poets were not unfamiliar among them, perhaps long before the period assigned in the text. Theophilus Edeffenus, a Maronite, by profession an astronomer, translated Homer into Syriac about the year 770.—Theophan. *Chronogr.* p. 376, Abulfarag. *ut supr.* p. 217. Reinesius, in his very curious account of the *manuscript collection of Greek chemists* in the library of Saxe-Gotha, relates that soon after the year 750 the Arabians translated Homer and Pindar, amongst other Greek books.—Ernest. Salom. Cyprian. *Catal. Codd. MSS. Bibl. Gothan.* pp. 71, 87. Apud Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* xii. p. 753. It is, however, certain, that the Greek philosophers were their objects. Compare Euseb. Renaudot, *De Barb. Aristotel. Versionib.* (apud Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* xii. pp. 252, 258).

eloquence of the Athenian orators. The Greek ethics were superseded by their Alcoran, and on this account they did not study the works of Plato.<sup>1</sup> Therefore no other Greek books engaged their attention but those which treated of mathematical, metaphysical, and physical knowledge. Mathematics coincided with their natural turn to astronomy and arithmetic. Metaphysics or logic suited their speculative genius, their love of tracing intricate and abstracted truths, and their ambition of being admired for difficult and remote researches. Physics, in which I include medicine, assisted the chemical experiments to which they were so much addicted:<sup>2</sup> and medicine, while it was connected with chemistry and botany, was a practical art of immediate utility. Their learning, but especially their medical knowledge, flourished most in Salerno, a city of Italy, where it formed the famous *Schola Salernitana*. The little book of medical precepts in leonine heroics, which bears the name of that school, is well known. This system was composed at the desire of Robert, duke of Normandy, William the Conqueror's son who, returning from Jerusalem in one of the crusades, and having heard of the fame of those Salernitan physicians, applied to them for the cure of a wound made by a poisoned arrow. It was written not only in verse, but in rhyming verse, that the prince might more easily retain the rules in his memory. It was published 1100. The author's name is Giovanni di Milano, a celebrated Salernitan physician. The monks of Caffino, hereafter mentioned, much improved this study.<sup>3</sup>

[The Arabians] studied Aristotle, Galen, and Hippocrates with unremitting ardour and assiduity: they translated their writings into the Arabic tongue,<sup>4</sup> and by degrees illustrated them with voluminous commentaries. Their caliph Al-manun was a singular encourager of these translations. He was a great master of the speculative sciences, and for his better information in them invited learned men from all parts of the world to Bagdat. He favoured the

<sup>1</sup> Yet Reinefius says, that about the year 750 they translated Plato into Arabic, together with the works of St. Austin, Ambrose, Jerom, Leo, and Gregory the Great.—*Ubi supr.* p. 260. Leo Africanus mentions, among the works of Averroes, *Expositiones Republicæ Platonis*. But he died so late as the year 1206.—*De Med. et Philosoph. Arab.* cap. xx.

<sup>2</sup> The earliest Arab chemist, whose writings are now extant, was Jeber. He is about the seventh century. His book, called by Golius, his Latin translator, *Lapis Philosophorum*, was written first in Greek, and afterwards translated by its author into Arabic. For Jeber was originally a Greek and a Christian, and afterwards went into Asia, and embraced Mahommedism. See Leo African. lib. iii. c. 106. The learned Boerhaave asserts, that many of Jeber's experiments are verified by present practice, and that several of them have been revived as modern discoveries. Boerhaave adds, that except the fancies about the philosopher's stone, the exactness of Jeber's operations is surprising.—*Hist. Chemiſtr.* pp. 14, 15. Lond. 1727.

<sup>3</sup> See *Chron. Caffin.* l. iii. c. 35. Medicine was at first practised by the monks or the clergy, who adopted it with the rest of the Arabian learning. See P. Diac. *De Vir. illuſtr.* cap. xiii. et *ibid. Not. Mar.* See also Ab. De Nuce ad *Chron. Caffin.* l. i. c. 9. And Leon. Ostiens, *Chron.* l. iii. c. 7. See *Sect. 17 infr.*

<sup>4</sup> Compare Renaudot, *ubi supr.* p. 258.

learned of every religion ; and in return they made him presents of their works, collected from the choicest pieces of Eastern literature, whether of Indians, Jews, Magians, or oriental Christians. He expended immense sums in purchasing valuable books written in Hebrew, Syriac, and Greek, that they might be translated into Arabic. Many Greek treatises of medicine were translated into that language by his orders. He hired the most learned persons from all quarters of his vast dominions to make these translations. Many celebrated astronomers flourished in his reign ; and he was himself famed for his skill in astronomy. This was about the year of Christ 820.<sup>1</sup>

A curious circumstance of the envy with which the Greeks at Constantinople treated this growing philosophy of the Arabians, is mentioned by Cedrenus. Al-Manun, hearing of one Leo, an excellent mathematician at Constantinople, wrote to the emperor, requesting that Leo might be permitted to settle in his dominions with a most ample salary, as a teacher in that science. The emperor, by this means being made acquainted with Leo's merit, established a school, in which he appointed Leo a professor for the sake of a specious excuse. The caliph sent a second time to the emperor, entreating that Leo might reside with him for a short time only ; offering likewise a large sum of money and terms of lasting peace and alliance. On which the emperor immediately created Leo Bishop of Thessalonica.<sup>2</sup> Herbelot also remarks that the same caliph, so universal was his search after Greek books, procured a copy of Apollonius Pergaeus the mathematician. But this copy contained only seven books. In the meantime, finding by the Introduction that the whole consisted of eight books, and that the eighth book was the foundation of the rest, and being informed that there was a complete copy in the emperor's library at Constantinople, he applied to him for a transcript. But the Greeks, merely from a principle of jealousy, would not suffer the application to reach the emperor, and it did not take effect.<sup>3</sup>

These Arabic translations of the Greek philosophers produced new treatises of their own, particularly in medicine and metaphysics. They continued to extend their conquests, and their frequent incursions into Europe before and after the ninth century, and their absolute establishment in Spain, imported the rudiments of useful knowledge into nations involved in the grossest ignorance, and unpossessed of the means of instruction. They founded universities in many cities of Spain and Africa.<sup>4</sup> [It has even been pretended that

<sup>1</sup> See Leo African. *De Med. et Phil. Arab.* cap. i. ; Al-Makin, pp. 139, 140 ; Eutych. pp. 434, 435.

<sup>2</sup> Cedren. *Hist. Comp.* 548, seq.

<sup>3</sup> *Biblioth. Oriental.* p. 978, col. a.

<sup>4</sup> See Hotting, *Hist. Eccl. Sac.* ix. sect. ii. lit. G g. According to the best writers of oriental history, the Arabians made great advances on the coasts communicating with Spain, I mean in Africa, about the year of Christ 692. And they became actually masters of Spain itself in the year 712. See *Med. Univ. Hist.* vol. ii. pp. 168, 179, edit. 1759. It may be observed that Sicily became part of

they] brought with them their books, which Charlemagne [or Charles the Great] commanded to be translated from Arabic into Latin :<sup>1</sup> and which, by the care and encouragement of that liberal prince being quickly disseminated over his extensive dominions, soon became familiar to the western world. Hence it is, that we find our early Latin authors of the dark ages chiefly employed in writing systems of the most abstruse sciences : and from these beginnings the Aristotelic philosophy acquired such establishment and authority, that from long prescription it remains to this day the sacred and uncontroverted doctrine of our schools.<sup>2</sup> From this fountain the infatuations of astrology took possession of the middle ages, and were continued even to modern times. To the peculiar genius of this people it is owing that chemistry became blended with so many extravagances, obscured with unintelligible jargon, and filled with fantastic notions, mysterious pretensions, and superstitious operations. And it is easy to conceive that among these visionary philosophers, so fertile in speculation, logic and metaphysics contracted much of that refinement and perplexity which for so many centuries exercised the genius of profound reasoners and captious disputants, and so long obstructed the progress of true knowledge. It may perhaps be regretted in the meantime, that this predilection of the Arabian scholars for philosophic enquiries prevented them from importing into Europe a literature of another kind. But rude and barbarous nations would not have been polished by the history, poetry and oratory of the Greeks. Although capable of comprehending the solid truths of many parts of science, they were unprepared to be impressed with ideas of elegance, and to relish works of taste. Men must be instructed before they can be refined ; and, in the gradations of knowledge, polite literature does not take place till some progress has first been made in philosophy. Yet it is at the same

---

the dominion of the Saracens within sixty years after Mahomet's death and in the seventh century, together with almost all Asia and Africa. Only part of Greece and the lesser Asia then remained to the Grecian empire at Constantinople. Conring, *De Script. &c. Comment.* p. 101, edit. Wratil. 1727. See also *Univ. His.* ut supr.

<sup>1</sup> Cuspinian, *De Cæsarib.* p. 419.

<sup>2</sup> [The Arabic learning of Spain only became known in France in the twelfth century.—*Wright.*] Yet it must not be forgotten that S. Austin had translated part of Aristotle's logic from the original Greek into Latin before the fifth century ; and that the peripatetic philosophy must have been partly known to the western scholars from the writings and translations of Boethius, who flourished about the year 520. Alcuin, Charlemagne's master, commends S. Austin's book, *De Predicamentis*, which he calls *Decem Natura verba*.—Rog. Bac. *de Util. Scient.* cap. xiv. See also *Op. Maj.* An ingenious and learned writer, already quoted, affirms that in the age of Charlemagne there were many Greek scholars who made translations of Aristotle, which were in use below the year 1100. I will not believe that any Europeans, properly so called, were competently skilled in Greek for this purpose in the time of Charlemagne ; nor, if they were, is it likely that of themselves they should have turned their thoughts to Aristotle's philosophy. Unless by *viri Greci docti*, this writer means the learned Arabs of Spain, which does not appear from his context. See Euseb. Renaudot, *ut supr.* p. 247.

time probable that the Arabians, among their literary stores, brought into Spain and Italy many Greek authors not of the scientific species:<sup>1</sup> and that the migration of this people into the western world, while it proved the fortunate instrument of introducing into Europe some of the Greek classics at a very early period, was moreover a means of preserving those genuine models of composition, and of transmitting them to the present generation.<sup>2</sup> It is certain that, about the close of the ninth century, polite letters, together with the sciences, began in some [very slight] degree to be studied in Italy, France, and Germany. Charlemagne, whose munificence and activity in propagating the Arabian literature [have probably been much overstated, is said to have] founded the universities of [Bologna], Pavia, Paris, and Osnaburgh. Charles the Bald seconded the salutary endeavours of Charlemagne. Lothaire, the brother of the latter, erected schools in the eight principal cities of Italy.<sup>3</sup> The number of monasteries and collegiate churches in those coun-

<sup>1</sup> It must not be forgotten that they translated Aristotle's *Poetics*. There is extant *Averrois Summa in Aristotelis poetriam ex Arabico sermone in Latinum traducta ab Hermano Alemanno*; *Præmittitur determinatio Ibinrofdin in poetria Aristotelis*. Venet. 1515. There is a translation of the *Poetics* into Arabic by Abou Muchar Metta, entitled *Abotica*. See Herbel. *Bibl. Oriental.* p. 18, col. a, p. 971, b, p. 40, col. 2, p. 337, col. 2. Farabi, who studied at Bagdad about the year 930, one of the translators of Aristotle's *Analytics*, wrote sixty books on that philosopher's Rhetoric; declaring that he had read it over two hundred times, and yet was equally desirous of reading it again.—Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* xiii. 265. Herbelot mentions Aristotle's *Morals*, translated by Honain.—*Bibl. Oriental.* p. 963, a. See also p. 971, a, 978, p. 974, b. Compare Mosheim, *Hist.* ch. i. pp. 217, 238.—Note C. p. 2, ch. 1. Averroes also paraphrased Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. There are also translations into Arabic of Aristotle's *Analytics* and his treatise of *Interpretation*. The first they called *Analuthica*, and the second *Bari Armenias*. But Aristotle's logic, metaphysics, and physics pleased them most; particularly the eight books of his physics, which exhibit a general view of that science. Some of our countrymen were translators of these Arabic books into Latin. Athelard, a monk of Bath, translated the Arabic Euclid into Latin about 1000.—Leland, *Script. Brit.* p. 200. There are some manuscripts of it in the Bodleian library and elsewhere. But the most beautiful and elegant copy I have seen is on vellum, in Trinity college library at Oxford.—*Cod. MSS.* Num. 10. [I am afraid that we must receive with a grain of allowance Warton's too confiding quotations from the earlier European bibliographers, such as Herbelot, for modern experience seems to be decidedly averse to the implicit reception of their statements.]

<sup>2</sup> See what I have said concerning the destruction of many Greek classics at Constantinople, in the Preface to *Theocritus*, Oxon. 1770, tom. i. *Prefat.* pp. xiv. xv. To which I will add, that so early as the fourth century, the Christian priests did no small injury to ancient literature, by prohibiting and discouraging the study of the old pagan philosophers. Hence the story, that Jerom dreamed he was whipped by the devil for reading Cicero. Compare what is said of Livy below.

<sup>3</sup> A.D. 823. See Murator. *Scriptor. Rer. Italicar.* i. p. 151. [But it is to be remarked that continental scholars have of late strenuously contradicted this view as to Charlemagne's encouragement of Arabic literature; and have even questioned, plausibly enough, the emperor's acquaintance with it—not, however, that it is improbable that a prince might have patronized what he did not personally understand.]

tries was daily increasing:<sup>1</sup> in which the youth, as a preparation to the study of the sacred scriptures, were exercised in reading profane authors together with the ancient doctors of the church, and habituated to a Latin style. The monks of Cassino in Italy were distinguished before the year 1000 not only for their knowledge of the sciences, but their attention to polite learning and an acquaintance with the classics. Their learned abbot Desiderius collected the best of the Greek and Roman writers. This fraternity not only composed learned treatises in music, logic, astronomy, and the Vitruvian architecture, but likewise employed a portion of their time in transcribing Tacitus,<sup>2</sup> Jornandes, Josephus, Ovid's *Fasti*, Cicero, Seneca, Donatus the grammarian, Virgil, Theocritus, and Homer.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cave mentions, "Coenobia Italica, Cassinense, Ferrarensis: Germanica, Fuldensis, Sangellensis, Augiensis, Lobensis: Gallica, Corbiensis, Rhemensis, Orbaensis, Floriacensis," &c.—*Hist. Lit. Sec. Photian.* p. 503, edit. 1688. Charlemagne also founded two archbishoprics and nine bishoprics in the most considerable towns of Germany.—Aub. Miraeus, *Op. Diplomat.* i. p. 16. Charlemagne seems to have founded libraries. See J. David, Koeler, *Diss. De Bibliotheca Caroli Mag.* Altorg. 1727. And *Act. Erudit. et Curios. Francorum.* p. x. p. 716, seq. 60. And *Hist. Lit. Franc.* tom. iv. 4to. p. 223. Compare Laun. c. iv. p. 30. Eginhart mentions his private library.—*Vit. Car. Mag.* p. 41, 2, edit. 1565. He even founded a library at Jerusalem for the use of those western pilgrims who visited the holy sepulchre.—*Hist. Lit. ut supr.* p. 373. His successor also, Charles the Bald, erected many libraries. Two of his librarians, Holduin and Ebbo, occur under that title in subscriptions.—*Bibl. Hist. Liter. Struvii et Jugl.* cap. ii. sect. xvii. p. 172. This monarch, before his last expedition into Italy about the year 870, in case of his decease orders his large library to be divided into three parts, and disposed of accordingly.—*Hist. Lit. ut supr.* tom. v. p. 514. Launoy justly remarks, that many noble public institutions of Charles the Bald were referred by succeeding historians to their more favourite hero Charlemagne. *Ubi supr.* p. 53, edit. Fabric. Their immediate successors, at least of the German race, were not such conspicuous patrons of literature.

<sup>2</sup> Lipsius says, that Leo the Tenth gave five hundred pieces of gold for the five first books of Tacitus's *Annals* to the monks of a convent in Saxony. This Lipsius calls the resurrection of Tacitus to life. *Ad Annal. Tacit.* lib. ii. c. 9. At the end of the edition of Tacitus, published under Leo's patronage by Beroaldus in 1515, this edict is printed, "Nomine Leonis X. proponta sunt præmia non mediocria his qui ad eum libros veteres neque haec tenuis editos adulterint."

<sup>3</sup> *Chron. Cassin. Monast.* lib. iii. c. 35. Poggio Florentinus found a *Stratagemata* of Frontinus, about the year 1420, in this monastery. Mabillon, *Mus. Ital.* tom. i. p. 133. Manuscripts of the following classics, now in the Harleian collection, appear to have been written between the eighth and [thirteenth] centuries inclusively. [Of two copies of Terence, Harl. 2670 and 2750, one is late tenth century, and the other, twelfth. Harl. 2622, 2716, and 2623 contain copies of various treatises by Cicero; they belong respectively to the eleventh, eleventh, and (late) twelfth centuries. In Harl. 2772 is a part of the *Aeneid* of the eleventh century, and Nos. 2672 and 2620 contain codices of Livy and Florus of the same period. 2737 is a copy of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Façti* of the twelfth or thirteenth century, while 2725 is a tenth century Horace (the Odes omitted).] Many of the same and other classic authors occur in the British Museum, written in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. See n. 5443, 2656, 2624, 2668, 2533, 2770, 2709, 2655, 2654, 2664, 2728, 5534, 2609, 2724, 5412, 2643, 2633. There are four copies of Statius, [three] of the twelfth century, n. 2720, 2608, 2665 [and one of the thirteenth—2636.] Plautus's *Comedies* are among the royal manuscripts, written in the [twelfth] 15 C. xi. 4. And some parts of Tully in the same, *ibid.* 1. Suetonius, 15 C. iv. 1. Horace's *Art of Poetry*, *Epistles*, and *Satires*, with Eutropius

In the mean time England shared these improvements in knowledge: and literature, chiefly derived from the same sources, was communicated to our Saxon ancestors about the beginning of the eighth century.<sup>1</sup> The Anglo-Saxons were converted to Christianity about the year 570. In consequence of this event, they soon acquired civility and learning. Hence they necessarily established a communication with Rome, and acquired a familiarity with the Latin language. During this period, it was the prevailing practice among the Saxons, not only of the clergy but of the better sort of laity, to make a voyage to Rome.<sup>2</sup> It is natural to imagine with what ardour the new converts visited the holy see, which at the same time was fortunately the capital of literature. While they gratified their devotion, undesignedly and imperceptibly they became acquainted with useful science.

In return, Rome sent her emissaries into Britain. Theodore, a monk of Rome, originally a Greek priest, a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, was consecrated archbishop of Canterbury, and sent into England by Pope Vitalian in the year 688.<sup>3</sup> He was skilled in the metrical art, astronomy, arithmetic, church-music, and the Greek and Latin languages.<sup>4</sup> The new prelate brought with him a large library, as it was called and esteemed, consisting of numerous Greek and Latin authors, among which were Homer in a large volume, written on paper with most exquisite elegance, the homilies of Saint Chrysostom on parchment, the Psalter, and Josephus's *Hypomnesticon*, all in Greek.<sup>5</sup> Theodore was accompanied into England by Adrian, a Neapolitan monk and a native of Africa, who was equally skilled in sacred and profane learning, and at the same time appointed by the Pope to the abbacy of Saint Austin's at Canterbury. Bede informs us, that Adrian requested Pope Vitalian to confer the archbishopric on Theodore, and that the Pope consented on condition that Adrian, "who had been twice in France, and on that account was better acquainted with the nature and difficulties of so long a journey," would conduct

[early in the thirteenth century], 15 B. vii. 1, 2, 3, xvi. 1, &c. Willibald, one of the learned Saxons whose literature will be mentioned in its proper place, having visited Rome and Jerusalem, retired for some time to this monastery, about the year 730. *Vit. Willibaldi Canis. Antiq. Lett.* xv. 695. And Pantal. *de Vir. Illust.* par. ii. p. 263. Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* i. 190. [But it should be added here that Warton's is a mere specimen list; for the MSS. of Latin classics in the national library, as shown by the new special catalogue, are very numerous; nor has Warton indicated some of the most important, for the sufficient reason that they have been added to the collection since his time.]

<sup>1</sup> Cave, *Secul. Eutych.* p. 382.

<sup>2</sup> "His temporibus multi Anglorum gentis nobiles et ignobiles, viri et foeminae, duces et privati, divini numinis instinctu Romanam venire consueverunt." &c. Bede, *De Temp.* Apud Leland, *Script. Brit. Celfridus.*

<sup>3</sup> Birchington, apud Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* i. 2. Cave, *Hist. Lit.* p. 464. Parker, *Antiquit. Brit.* p. 53.

<sup>4</sup> Bed. *Hist. Ecclesiast. Gent. Angl.* iv. 2. Bede says of Theodore and of Adrian mentioned below, "Uisque hodie supersunt de eorum discipulis, qui Latinam Graecamque linguam, aequa ut propriam in qua nati sunt, norunt." See also *ibid.* c. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Parker, *ut supr.* p. 80. See also Lambarde's *Peramb. Kent.* p. 233. A transcript of Josephus 500 years old was given to the public library at Cambridge by the archbishop. See Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* x. 109.

Theodore into Britain.<sup>1</sup> They were both escorted to the city of Canterbury by Benedict Biscop, a native of Northumberland and a monk, who had formerly been acquainted with them in a visit which he made to Rome.<sup>2</sup> Benedict seems at this time to have been one of the most distinguished of the Saxon ecclesiastics: availing himself of the arrival of these two learned strangers, under their direction and assistance he procured workmen from France, and built the monastery of Weremouth in Northumberland. The church he constructed of stone, after the manner of the Roman architecture, and adorned its walls and roof with pictures which he purchased at Rome, representing among other sacred subjects the Virgin Mary, the twelve apostles, the evangelical history, and the visions of the Apocalypse.<sup>3</sup> The windows were glazed by artists brought from France. But I mention this foundation to introduce an anecdote much to our purpose. Benedict added to his monastery an ample library, which he stored with Greek and Latin volumes [which, it may be presumed, were] imported by himself from Italy.<sup>4</sup> Bede has thought it a matter worthy to be recorded, that Ceolfrid, his successor in the government of Weremouth-abbey, augmented this collection with three volumes of pandects and a book of cosmography wonderfully enriched with curious workmanship, and bought at Rome.<sup>5</sup> The example of the pious Benedict was immediately followed by Acca, Bishop of Hexham in the same province: who, having finished his cathedral church by the help of architects, masons, and glasiers hired in Italy, adorned it according to Leland with a valuable library of Greek and Latin authors.<sup>6</sup> But Bede, Acca's cotemporary, relates that this library was entirely composed of the histories of those apostles and martyrs to whose reliques he had dedicated several altars in his church, and other ecclesiastical treatises which he had collected with infinite labour.<sup>7</sup> Bede however calls it a most copious and noble library.<sup>8</sup> Nor is it foreign to our purpose to add, that Acca invited from Kent into Northumberland, and retained in his service during the space of twelve years, a celebrated chantor named Maban, by the assistance of whose instructions and superintendence he not only regulated the church music of his diocese, but introduced the use of many Latin hymns hitherto

<sup>1</sup> Bed. *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 1. "Et ob id majorem notitiam hujus itineris," &c.

<sup>2</sup> See Math. *Westmon.* sub an. 703. *Lel. Script. Brit.* p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> See Bede, *Hist. Abbat. Wiremuth.* p. 295, 297, edit. Cantab. In one of his expeditions to Rome, he brought over John, arch-chantor of St. Peter's at Rome, who introduced the Roman method of singing mass. Bed. *ibid.* p. 295. He taught the monks of Benedict's abbey; and all the singers of the monasteries of that province came from various parts to hear him sing. Bed. *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 18. He likewise brought over from Rome two silken palls of exquisite workmanship, with which he afterwards purchased of king Aldfrid, successor of Elfrid, two pieces of land for his monastery. Bed. *Vit. Abb.* ut supr. p. 297. Bale censures Benedict for being the first who introduced into England painters, glasiers, *et ejusdem generis alios, ad voluptatem artifices.* Cent. i. 82. This is the language of a puritan in life, as well as in religion.

<sup>4</sup> *Lel. ubi supr.* 110.

<sup>5</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abbat. Wiremuth.* p. 299. Op. Bed. edit. Cantab.

<sup>6</sup> *Lel. ibid.* p. 105. <sup>7</sup> Bed. *Hist.* v. 21. <sup>8</sup> *Hist.* v. c. 20.

unknown in the northern churches of England.<sup>1</sup> It appears that before the arrival of Theodore and Adrian celebrated schools for educating youth in the sciences had been long established in Kent.<sup>2</sup> Literature, however, seems at this period to have flourished with equal reputation at the other extremity of the island, and even in our most northern provinces. Ecbert, bishop of York, founded a library in his cathedral which, like some of those already mentioned, is said to have been replenished with a variety of Latin and Greek books.<sup>3</sup> Alcuin, whom Ecbert appointed his first librarian, hints at this library in a Latin epistle to Charlemagne: "Send me from France some learned treatises, of equal excellence with those which I preserve here in England under my custody, collected by the industry of my master Ecbert: and I will send to you some of my youths, who shall carry with them the flowers of Britain into France. So that there shall not only be an inclosed garden at York, but also at Tours some sprouts of Paradise,"<sup>4</sup> &c. William of Malmesbury judged this library to be of sufficient importance not only to be mentioned in his History, but to be styled, "Omnium liberalium artium armarium, nobilissimum bibliothecam."<sup>5</sup> This repository remained till the reign of King Stephen, when it was destroyed by fire, with great part of the city of York.<sup>6</sup> Its founder Ecbert died in the year 767.<sup>7</sup> Before the end of the eighth century, the monasteries of Westminster, Saint Alban's, Worcester, Malmesbury, Glastonbury, with some others, were founded and opulently endowed. That of St. Alban's was filled with one hundred monks by King Offa.<sup>8</sup> Many new bishoprics were also established in England: all which institutions, by multiplying the number of ecclesiastics, turned the attention of many persons to letters.

The best [Latin] writers among the Saxons flourished about the eighth century. These were, Aldhelm, bishop of Shirburn, Ceolfrid, Alcuin, and Bede; with whom I must [not] join King Alfred. But

<sup>1</sup> Bed. *Hist. Eccl.* v. c. 21. Maban had been taught to sing in Kent by the successors of the disciples of Saint Gregory. Compare Bed. iv. 2. If we may believe William of Malmesbury, who wrote about the year 1120, they had organs in the Saxon churches before the Conquest. He says that Archbishop Dunstan, in king Edgar's reign, gave an organ to the abbey-church of Malmesbury; which he describes to have been like those in use at present. "Organa, ubi per æreas fistulas musicis mensuris elaboratas, dudum conceptas follis vomit anxius auras." William, who was a monk of this abbey, adds that this benefaction of Dunstan was inscribed in a Latin distich, which he quotes, on the organ pipes. *Vit. Aldhelm.* (Whart. *Angl. Sacr.* ii. p. 33.) See what is said of Dunstan below. And Osb. *Vit. S. Dunst.* (Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* ii. 93.) [Mr. Turner has quoted a passage from Aldhelm's poem *De Laude Virginum*, which confirms this statement of Malmesbury:]

"Maxima millenis auscultans organa flabris  
Mulceat auditum ventosifollibus iste,  
Quamlibet auratis fulgescant cætera capsis."<sup>9</sup> Vol. ii. p. 408.—*Price.*

<sup>2</sup> See Bed. *Op.* per Smith, p. 724, seq. *Append.*

<sup>3</sup> Lel. p. 114. [The only Greek classic was Aristotle.—*Price.*]

<sup>4</sup> Bale, ii. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Cave, *Hist. Lit.* p. 486.

<sup>5</sup> *De Reg.* i. 1.

<sup>6</sup> A. D. 793. See Dugd. *Monast.* i. p. 177.

<sup>8</sup> Pitts, p. 154.

in an enquiry of this nature, Alfred deserves particular notice, not only as a writer, but as the illustrious rival of Charlemagne in protecting and assisting the restoration of literature. [It must be received as a pleasant exaggeration of his actual services to letters that he is, absurdly enough,] said to have founded the University of Oxford; [but it is possible] that, in imitation of Charlemagne's similar institutions, he appointed learned persons to give public and gratuitous instructions in theology, but principally in the fashionable sciences of logic, astronomy, arithmetic, and geometry, at that place which was then a considerable town, and conveniently situated in the neighbourhood of those royal seats at which Alfred chiefly resided. He suffered no priest that was illiterate to be advanced to any ecclesiastical dignity.<sup>1</sup> He invited his nobility to educate their sons in learning, and requested those lords of his court who had no children, to send to school such of their younger servants as discovered a promising capacity, and to breed them to the clerical profession.<sup>2</sup> Alfred, while a boy, had himself experienced the inconveniences arising from a want of scholars, and even of common instructors, in his dominions; for he was twelve years of age before he could procure in the western kingdom a master properly qualified to teach him the alphabet. But, while yet unable to read, he could repeat from memory a great variety of Saxon songs.<sup>3</sup> He was fond of cultivating his native tongue: and with a view of inviting the people in general to a love of reading and to a knowledge of books which they could not otherwise have understood, he translated many Latin authors into Saxon. These, among others, were Boethius of the *Consolation of Philosophy*, a manuscript of which [written not very long perhaps after] Alfred's age still remains,<sup>4</sup> Orosius's *History of*

<sup>1</sup> MS. Bever, MSS. Coll. Trin. Oxon. Codd. xlvi. f. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Bever, *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Flor. Vigorn. *sub ann. 871.* Brompton, *Chron. in Alfr.* p. 814. And MS. Bever, *ut supr.* It is curious to observe the simplicity of this age, in the method by which Alfred computed time. He caused six wax tapers to be made, each twelve inches long, and of as many ounces in weight: on these tapers he ordered the inches to be regularly marked; and having found that one of them burned just four hours, he committed the care of them to the keepers of his chapel, who from time to time gave due notice how the hours went. But as in windy weather the candles were more wasted, to remedy this inconvenience he invented lanthorns, there being then no glass to be met with in his dominions. Affer. Menev. *Vit. Alfr.* p. 68, edit. Wife. In the meantime, and during this very period, the Persians imported into Europe a machine, which presented the first rudiments of a striking clock. It was brought as a present to Charlemagne from Abdella King of Persia by two monks of Jerusalem in the year 800. Among other presents, says Eginhart, was an horologe of brass, wonderfully constructed by some mechanical artifice, in which the course of the twelve hours ad clepsydram vertebatur, with as many little brasen balls, which at the close of each hour dropped down on a sort of bells underneath, and sounded the end of the hour. There were also twelve figures of horsemen who, when the twelve hours were completed, issued out at twelve windows, which till then stood open, and returning again, shut the windows after them. He adds, that there were many other curiosities in this instrument, which it would be tedious to recount. Eginhart, *Car. Mag.* p. 108. It is to be remembered, that Eginhart was an eye-witness of what is here described; and that he was an abbot, a skilful architect, and very learned in the sciences.

<sup>4</sup> MSS. Cott. Oth. A. 6, 8vo. membr. [This was one of the MSS. nearly

the Pagans, Saint Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, the venerable Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, and the *Soliloquies* of Saint Austin. Probably Saint Austin was selected by Alfred, because he was the favourite author of Charlemagne.<sup>1</sup> Alfred died in the year 900, and was buried at Hyde Abbey, in the suburbs of Winchester, under a sumptuous monument of porphyry.<sup>2</sup>

Aldhelm, kinsman of Ina, king of the West Saxons, frequently visited France and Italy. While a monk of Malmesbury in Wiltshire, he went from his monastery to Canterbury, in order to learn logic, rhetoric, and the Greek language, of Archbishop Theodore, and of Albin abbot of Saint Austin's,<sup>3</sup> the pupil of Adrian.<sup>4</sup> But he had before acquired some knowledge of Greek and Latin under Maidulf, an Hibernian or Scot, who had erected a small monastery or school at Malmesbury.<sup>5</sup> Camden affirms that Aldhelm was the first of the Saxons who wrote in Latin, and that he taught his countrymen the art of Latin versification.<sup>6</sup> But a very intelligent antiquarian in this sort of literature mentions an anonymous Latin poet, who wrote the life of Charlemagne in verse, and adds that he was the first of the Saxons that attempted to write Latin verse.<sup>7</sup> It is however certain, that Aldhelm's Latin compositions, whether in verse or prose, as novelties were deemed extraordinary performances, and excited the attention and admiration of scholars in other countries. A learned cotemporary, who lived in a remote province of a Frankish territory, in an epistle to Aldhelm has this remarkable expression, "Vestræ Latinitatis Panegyricus rumor has reached us even at this distance,"<sup>8</sup> &c. In reward of these uncommon merits he was made Bishop of Sherborne in Dorsetshire in the year 705.<sup>9</sup> His writings are chiefly theological: but he has likewise left in Latin verse a book of *Ænigmata*, copied from a work of the same title under the name of *Symposius*,<sup>10</sup> a poem *De Virginitate* hereafter cited,

destroyed in the fire. The remains of it have been inlaid. It may belong to the tenth century.]

<sup>1</sup> He was particularly fond of Austin's book *De Civitate Dei*. Eginhart, *Vit. Car. Magn.* p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> After. Menev. p. 72, ed. Wise.

<sup>3</sup> Bede says, that Theodore and Adrian taught Tobias Bishop of Rochester the Greek and Latin tongues so perfectly, that he could speak them as fluently as his native Saxon. *Hist. Eccl.* v. 23.

<sup>4</sup> Lel. p. 97. Thorn says, that Albin learned Greek of Adrian. *Chron. (Dec. Script.* p. 1771).

<sup>5</sup> W. Malmesb. *ubi infr.* p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Wiltsh. p. 116. But this Aldhelm affirms of himself in his treatise on Metre. See W. Malmesb. *apud Wharton, Angl. Sacr.* ii. 4, seq. [And Mr. Wright's *Biog. Brit. Lit. A—S. Per.* p. 214.]

<sup>7</sup> Coringius, *Script. Comment.* p. 108. This poem was printed by Reineccius at Helmstadt [in the last century] with a large commentary. Compare Voss. *Hist. Lat.* iii. 4.

<sup>8</sup> W. Malmesb. *ut supr.* p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> See Fabric. *Bibl. Med. Lat.* iv. p. 693. And *Bib. Lat.* i. p. 681. And W. Malm. *ubi supr.* p. 7. Among the manuscripts of Exeter Cathedral is a book of *Ænigmata* in Saxon, some of which are written in Runic characters, 11, fol. 98. [Printed under the care of Mr. Thorpe, 1842, 8vo., under the title of *The Exeter*

<sup>10</sup> Cave, p. 466.

and treatises on arithmetic, astrology, rhetoric, and metre. The last treatise is a proof that the ornaments of composition now began to be studied. Leland mentions his *Cantiones Saxonicae*, one of which continued to be commonly sung in William of Malmesbury's time: and, as it was artfully interspersed with many allusions to passages of Scripture, was often sung by Aldhelm himself to the populace in the streets, with a design of alluring the ignorant and idle by so specious a mode of instruction to a sense of duty and a knowledge of religious subjects.<sup>1</sup> Malmesbury observes, that Aldhelm might be justly deemed "ex acumine Græcum, ex nitore Romanum, et ex pompa Anglum."<sup>2</sup> It is evident that Malmesbury, while he here characterises the Greeks by their acuteness, took his idea of them from their scientific literature, which was then only known. After the revival of the Greek philosophy by the Saracens, Aristotle and Euclid were familiar in Europe long before Homer and Pindar. The character of Aldhelm is thus drawn by an ancient chronicler: "He was an excellent harper, a most eloquent Saxon and Latin poet, a most expert chantor or singer, a doctor egregius, and admirably versed in the Scriptures and the liberal sciences."<sup>3</sup>

*Book.* Mr. Wright adds, in a MS. note: "It is a mistake about their being written in Runic characters. Runic letters are introduced in one or two of the riddles as a puzzle. The name of each runic letter had a meaning which could be conveniently employed in riddles."

<sup>1</sup> Malmf. *ubi supr.* p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ubi supr.* p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Chron. Anon.* Leland. *Collectan.* ii. 278. To be skilled in singing is often mentioned as an accomplishment of the ancient Saxon ecclesiastics. Bede says that Edda, a monk of Canterbury and a learned writer, was "primus cantandi magister." *Hift.* lib. iv. cap. 2. Wolstan, a learned monk of Winchester of the same age, was a celebrated singer, and even wrote a treatise *de Tonorum Harmonia*, cited by William of Malmesbury, *De Reg.* lib. ii. c. 39. *Lel. Script. Brit.* p. 165. Their skill in playing on the harp is also frequently mentioned. Of Saint Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, about the year 988, it is said that among his sacred studies he cultivated the arts of writing, harping, and painting. *Vit. S. Dunstan.* MSS. Cott. Brit. Mus. *Fausti.* B. 13. Hickes has engraved a figure of our Saviour [falsely said to have been] drawn by Saint Dunstan, with a specimen of his writing, both remaining in the Bodleian library. *Gram. Saxon.* p. 104, cap. xxii. [It has also been engraved by Strutt, *Horda Angel Cynnen*, vol. 3. Dunstan, had he been the artist, would scarcely have called himself *Sanctus*.—M.] The writing and many of the pictures and illuminations in our Saxon manuscripts were executed by the priests. A book of the gospel, preserved in the Cotton library, is a fine specimen of the Saxon calligraphy and decorations. It is written by Eadfrid, bishop of Durham, in the most exquisite manner. Ethelwold his successor did the illuminations, the capital letters, the picture of the cross, and the evangelists, with infinite labour and elegance: and Bilfrid the anachorete covered the book, thus written and adorned, with gold and silver plates and precious stones. All this is related by Aldred, the Saxon glossator, at the end of St. John's gospel. The work was finished about the year 720. MSS. Cott. Brit. Mus. *Nero.* D. 4, Cod. membr. fol. quadrat. Aelfin, a monk, is the elegant scribe of many Saxon pieces chiefly historical and scriptural in the same library, and perhaps the painter of the figures, probably soon after the year 978. *Ibid. Titus.* D. 26, Cod. membr. 8vo. The Saxon copy of the four evangelists, which King Athelstan gave to Durham Church, remains in the same library. It has the painted images of S. Cuthbert, radiated and crowned, blessing King Athelstan, and of the four evangelists. [Since engraved in the third volume of Strutt's *Manners and*

Alcuin, Bishop Ecbert's librarian at York, was a cotemporary pupil with Aldhelm under Theodore and Adrian at Canterbury.<sup>1</sup> During the present period, there seems to have been a close correspondence and intercourse between the French and Anglo-Saxons in matters of literature. Alcuin was invited from England into France, to superintend the studies of Charlemagne, whom he instructed in logic, rhetoric, and astronomy.<sup>2</sup> He was also the master of Rhabanus Maurus, who became afterwards the governor and preceptor of the great abbey of Fulda in Germany, one of the most flourishing seminaries in Europe, founded by Charlemagne, and inhabited by two hundred and seventy monks.<sup>3</sup> Alcuin was likewise

*Customs of the English*: and in vol. i. of the same work there is an engraving of the figure of our Saviour mentioned in this note.—*Parc.*] This is undoubtedly the work of the monks; but Wanley believed it to have been done in France. *Otho.* B. 9, Cod. membran. fol. At Trinity College in Cambridge is a Psalter in Latin and Saxon, admirably written, and illuminated with letters in gold, silver, miniated, &c. It is full of a variety of historical pictures. At the end is the figure of the writer Eadwin, supposed to be a monk of Canterbury, holding a pen of metal, undoubtedly used in such sort of writing, with an inscription importing his name and excellence in the calligraphic art. It appears to be performed about the reign of King Stephen. [It has been printed, I think, in France, by Francisque Michel.] Cod. membr. fol. post Clas, a dextr. Ser. Med. 5. [among the *Single Codices*.] Eadwin was a famous and frequent writer of books for the library of Christ-church at Canterbury, as appears by a catalogue of their books taken A. D. 1315, in *Bibl. Cott. Galb. E 4*. The eight historical pictures richly illuminated with gold, of the *Annunciation*, the *Meeting of Mary and Elizabeth*, &c. in a manuscript of the gospel, are also thought to be of the reign of King Stephen, yet perhaps from the same kind of artists. The Saxon clergy were ingenious artificers in many other respects. S. Dunstan above mentioned made two of the bells of Abingdon Abbey with his own hands. *Monast. Angl.* tom. i. p. 104. John of Glastonbury, who wrote about the year 1400, relates that there remained in the abbey of Glastonbury in his time, crosses, incense-vessels, and vestments, made by Dunstan while a monk there, cap. 161. He adds that Dunstan also handled “scalpellum ut sculperet.” It is laid that he could model any image in brass, iron, gold, or silver. *Osb. Vit. S. Dunstan.* apud Whart. ii. 94. Ervene, one of the teachers of Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, perhaps a monk of Bury, was famous for calligraphy and skill in colours. To invite his pupils to read, he made use of a Psalter and Sacramentary, whose capital letters he had richly illuminated with gold. This was about the year 980. Will. Malmesb. *Vit. Wulf.* (Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* p. 244.) William of Malmesbury says that Elfric, a Saxon abbot of Malmesbury, was a skilful architect, *edificandi gnares*. *Vit. Aldhelm.* (Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* ii. p. 33.) Herman, one of the Norman bishops of Salisbury about 1080, condescended to write, bind, and illuminate books. *Monast. Angl.* tom. iii. p. 375. In some of these instances I have wandered below the Saxon times. It is indeed evident from various proofs which I could give, that the religious could practise these arts long afterwards. But the object of this note was the existence of them among the Saxon clergy.

<sup>1</sup> *Dedicat. Hist. Eccl. Bed.* <sup>2</sup> *Eginhart. Vit. Kar. Magn.* p. 30, ed. 1565, 4to.

<sup>3</sup> Rhabanus instructed them not only in the Scriptures, but in profane literature. A great number of other scholars frequented these lectures. He was the first founder of a library in this monastery. *Cave, Hist. Lit.* p. 540. *Sæc. Phot.* His leisure hours being entirely taken up in reading or transcribing, he was accused by some of the idle monks of attending so much to his studies, that he neglected the public duties of his station and the care of the revenues of the abbey. They therefore removed him, yet afterwards in vain attempted to recall him. *Serrar. Rer. Mogunt.* lib. iv. p. 625.

employed by Charlemagne to regulate the lectures and discipline of the universities,<sup>1</sup> which that prudent and magnificent potentate had newly constituted.<sup>2</sup> He is said to have joined to the Greek and Latin an acquaintance with the Hebrew tongue.

At Trinity College in Cambridge there is [a Latin] Psalter, with [Anglo-Norman and Anglo-Saxon interlinear translations] of great antiquity;<sup>3</sup> [and in the library of the Dean and Chapter of Durham there is a second MS. containing the Ritual in Latin with an interlined Anglo-Saxon version. This has been sometimes described as the *Ritual of King Alfred.*]<sup>4</sup> Homilies, lives of saints, commentaries on the Bible, with the usual systems of logic, astronomy, rhetoric, and grammar, compose the formidable catalogue of Alcuin's numerous writings. Yet in his books of the sciences, he sometimes ventured to break through the pedantic formalities of a systematical teacher: he has thrown one of his treatises in logic and, I think, another in grammar into a dialogue between the author and Charlemagne.<sup>5</sup>

In the mean time we must not form too magnificent ideas of these celebrated masters of science, who were thus invited into foreign countries to conduct the education of mighty monarchs, and to plan the rudiments of the most illustrious academies. Their merits are in a great measure relative. Their circle of reading was contracted, their systems of philosophy jejune; and their lectures rather served to stop the growth of ignorance, than to produce any positive or important improvements in knowledge. They were unable to make excursions from their circumscribed paths of scientific instruction into the spacious and fruitful regions of liberal and manly study. Those of their hearers, who had passed through the course of the sciences with applause, and aspired to higher acquisitions, were exhorted to read Caiusdorus and Boethius, whose

<sup>1</sup> John Mailros, a Scot, one of Bede's scholars, is said to have been employed by Charlemagne in founding the university of Pavia. *Dempst.* xii. 904.

<sup>2</sup> See *Op. Alcuin.* 1617. *Præfat.* Andr. *Quercetan.* Mabillon says, that Alcuin pointed the homilies and St. Austin's epistle, at the instance of Charlemagne. *Carl. Magn. R. Diplomat.* p. 52, a. Charlemagne was most fond of astronomy. He learned also arithmetic. In his treasury he had three tables of silver, and a fourth of gold, of great weight and size. One of these, which was square, had a picture or representation of Constantinople: another, a round one, a map of Rome: a third, which was of the most exquisite workmanship and greatest weight, consisting of three orbs, contained a map of the world. *Eginhart, ubi subr.* pp. 29, 31, 41.

<sup>3</sup> MSS. Cod. Coll. S. S. Trin. Cant. a dextr. Ser. Med. 5, membran. 4to. [The correction in the text is Mr. T. Wright's. The Psalter is of two versions, written in separate columns, with an Anglo-Norman translation over one, and an Anglo-Saxon over the other. It has been edited by M. F. Michel.] Bede says, that he compiled part of his *Chronicon ex Hebraica veritate*, that is, from S. Jerom's Latin translation of the Bible; for he adds, "nos qui per beati interpretis Hieronymi *induſtriam* puro Hebraicæ veritatis fonte potamur," &c. And again, "Ex Hebraica veritate, quæ ad nos per memoratum interpretem pure pervenisse," &c. He mentions on this occasion the Greek Septuagint translation of the Bible, but not as if he had ever seen or consulted it. *Bed. Chron.* p. 34, edit. Cant. *Op. Bed.*

<sup>4</sup> [Edited by M. Michel for the Surtees Society, 1840.]

<sup>5</sup> *Dedicat. Hift. Eccl. Bed.* To King Ceolwulphus, pp. 37, 38, edit. Op. Cant.

writings they placed at the summit of profane literature, and which they believed to be the great boundaries of human erudition.

I have already mentioned Ceolfrid's presents of books to Benedict's library at Wearmouth Abbey. He wrote an account of his travels into France and Italy. But his principal work, and I believe the only one preserved, is his dissertation concerning the clerical tonsure and the rites of celebrating Easter.<sup>1</sup> This was written at the desire of Naiton, a Pictish king, who dispatched ambassadors to Ceolfrid for information concerning these important articles; requesting Ceolfrid at the same time to send him some skilful architects, who could build in his country a church of stone, after the fashion of the Romans.<sup>2</sup> Ceolfrid died on a journey to Rome, and was buried in a monastery of Navarre, in the year 706.<sup>3</sup>

But Bede, whose name is so nearly and necessarily connected with every part of the literature of this period, and who has therefore been often already mentioned, was emphatically styled the Venerable by his contemporaries, and was by far the most learned of the Saxon writers. He was of the northern school, if it may be so called; and was educated in the monastery of Saint Peter at Wearmouth, under the care of the abbots Ceolfrid and Bischop.<sup>4</sup> Bale affirms, that Bede learned physics and mathematics from the purest sources, the original Greek and Roman writers on these subjects.<sup>5</sup> But this hasty assertion [in common with many other wholly unfounded statements from the same source,] in part at least may justly be doubted. His knowledge, if we consider his age, was extensive and profound: and it is amazing that, in so rude a period and during a life of no considerable length, he should have made so successful a progress and such rapid improvements in scientifical and philological studies, and have composed so many elaborate treatises on different subjects.<sup>6</sup> It is diverting to see the French critics censuring Bede for credulity: they might as well have accused him of superstition. It is true, that Bede has introduced many miracles and visions into his history. Yet some of these are pleasing to the imagination: they are tinctured with the gloom of the cloister, operating on the extravagances of oriental invention. I will give an instance or two. A monk of Northumberland died, and was brought again to life. In this interval of death, a young man in shining apparel came and led him, without speaking, to a valley of infinite depth, length and breadth: one side was formed by a prodigious sheet of fire, and the

<sup>1</sup> Bed. *Hist. Eccl.* v. 22. And *Concil. Gen.* vi. p. 1423.

<sup>2</sup> Bed. *Hist. Eccl.* ib. c. 21, iv. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Bed. *Hist. Abb.* p. 300.

<sup>4</sup> Bed. *Hist. Eccl.* v. 24.

<sup>5</sup> ii. 94.

<sup>6</sup> "Libros septuaginta octo edidit, quos ad finem *Historia sue Anglicana* edidit. [See *Op. edit. Cant.* pp. 222, 223, lib. v. c. 24.] Hic succumbit ingenium, deficit eloquium, sufficienter admirari hominem a scholastico exercitio tam procul amotum, tam sobrio sermone tanta elaborasse volumina," &c. *Chron. Bever* MS. Coll. Trin. Oxon. *ut supr.* f. 65. [Bever was a monk of Westminster circ. A.D. 1400.] For a full and exact list of Bede's works, the curious reader is referred to [Wright's *Biog. Brit. Literaria*, 1846.]

opposite side filled with hail and ice. Both sides were swarming with souls of departed men who were for ever in search of rest, alternately shifting their situation to these extremes of heat and cold. The monk, supposing this place to be hell, was told by his guide that he was mistaken. The guide then led him, greatly terrified with this spectacle, to a more distant place where, he says, “I saw on a sudden a darkness come on, and everything was obscured. When I entered this place I could discern no object, on account of the increasing darkness, except the countenance and glittering garments of my conductor. As we went forward I beheld vast torrents of flame spouting upwards from the ground, as from a large well, and falling down into it again. As we came near it my guide suddenly vanished, and left me alone in the midst of darkness and this horrible vision. Deformed and uncouth spirits arose from this blazing chasm, and attempted to draw me in with fiery forks.” But his guide here returned, and they all retired at his appearance. Heaven is then described with great strength of fancy. I have seen an old ballad, called the *Dead Man's Song*, on this story. And Milton's hell may perhaps be taken from this idea.<sup>1</sup> Our historian in the next chapter relates, that two most beautiful youths came to a person lying sick on his death-bed, and offered him a book to read, richly ornamented, in which his good actions were recorded. Immediately after this, the house was surrounded and filled with an army of spirits of most horrible aspect. One of them, who by the gloom of his darksome countenance appeared to be their leader, produced a book, *codicem horrendæ visionis, et magnitudini's enormis et ponderis pæne importabilis*, and ordered some of his attendant demons to bring it to the sick man. In this were contained all his sins, &c.<sup>2</sup>

There is much perspicuity and facility in Bede's Latin style. But it is void of elegance, and often of purity; it shows with what grace and propriety he would have written, had his mind been formed on better models. Whoever looks for digestion of materials, disposition of parts, and accuracy of narration, in this writer's historical works, expects what could not exist at that time. He has recorded but few civil transactions: but besides that his history professedly considers ecclesiastical affairs, we should remember that the building of a church, the preferment of an abbot, the canonisation of a martyr, and the importation into England of the shin-bone of an apostle, were necessarily matters of much more importance in Bede's conception than victories or revolutions. He is fond of minute description; but particularities are the fault and often the merit of early historians.<sup>3</sup> Bede wrote many pieces of Latin poetry.

<sup>1</sup> Bed. *Hist. Eccl.* v. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib. cap. 14.*

<sup>3</sup> [M. d'Argonne,] who writes under the name of M. de Vigneul Marville, observes that Bede, “when he speaks of the Magi who went to worship our Saviour, is very particular in the account of their names, age, and respective offerings. He says, that Melchior was old, and had grey hair, with a long beard; and that it was he offered gold to Christ, in acknowledgment of his sovereignty. That Gaspar, the second of the magi, was young, and had no beard, and that it was he

The following verses from his *Meditatio de die Iudicii*, a translation of which into Saxon verse is now preserved in the library of Bennet College at Cambridge,<sup>1</sup> are at least well turned and harmonious.

Inter florigeras fœcundi cespitis herbas,  
Flamine ventorum resonantibus undique ramis.<sup>2</sup>

Some of Aldhelm's verses are exactly in this cast, written on the Dedication of the abbey-church at Malmesbury to Saint Peter and St. Paul.

Hic celebranda rudit<sup>3</sup> florescit gloria templi,  
Limpida quæ facri celebrat vexilla triumphi :  
Hic Petrus et Paulus, tenebroſi lumina mundi,  
Præcipui patres populi qui frena gubernant,  
Carminibus crebris alma celebrantur in aula.  
Claviger æthereus, portam qui pandis in æthra,  
Candida celorum recludens regna tonantis,  
Exaudi clemens populorum vota precantum,  
Marcida qui riguis humectant imribus ora.<sup>4</sup>

The strict and superabundant attention of these Latin poets to prosodic rules, on which it was become fashionable to write didactic systems, made them accurate to excess in the metrical conformation of their hexameters, and produced a faultless and flowing monotony. Bede died in the monastery of Wearmouth, which he never had once quitted, in the year 735.<sup>5</sup>

I have already observed, and from good authorities, that many of these Saxon scholars were skilled in Greek. Yet scarce any considerable monuments have descended to modern times, to prove their familiarity with that language. I will, however, mention such as have occurred to me. Archbishop Parker, or rather his learned scribe Jocelin, affirms that the copy of Homer, and of some of the other books imported into England by Archbishop Theodore, as I have above related, remained in his time.<sup>6</sup> There is, however, no allusion to Homer, nor any mention made of his name, in the writings of the Saxons now existing. In the Bodleian library are some extracts from the books of the Prophets in Greek and Latin : the Latin is in Saxon, and the Greek in Latino-greek capital characters. A Latino-greek alphabet is prefixed. In the same manuscript is a chapter of Deuteronomy, Greek and Latin, but both are in Saxon characters.<sup>7</sup> In the curious and very valuable library of Bennet College in Cambridge, is a very ancient copy of Aldhelm

who offered frankincense, in recognition of our Lord's divinity : and that Balthasar, the third, was of a dark complexion, had a large beard, and offered myrrh to our Saviour's humanity."<sup>8</sup> He is likewise very circumstantial in the description of their dresses. *Mélanges de l'Hist. et de Lit.* Paris, 1725. 12mo. tom. iii. p. 283, &c. What was more natural than this in such a writer and on such a subject? In the meantime it may be remarked, that this description of Bede, taken perhaps from constant tradition, is now to be seen in the old pictures and popular representations of the *Wise Men's Offering*.

<sup>1</sup> Cod. MSS. lxxix. p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Malmsb. *apud* Whart. *ut supr.* p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> recent; newly built.

<sup>4</sup> [Wright's *Biogr. Brit. Lit.* *ut supr.*]

<sup>5</sup> Cave, *ubi supr.* p. 473. Sæc. Eiconocl.

<sup>6</sup> *Antiquitat. Brit.* p. 80.

<sup>7</sup> NE. D. 19, MSS. membr. 8vo. fol. 24, 19.

*de Laude Virginitatis.* In it is inserted a specimen of Saxon poetry full of Latin and Greek words, and at the end of the manuscript some Runic letters occur.<sup>1</sup> I suspect that their Grecian literature was a matter of ostentation rather than use. William of Malmesbury, in his *Life of Aldhelm*, censures an affectation in the writers of this age: that they were fond of introducing in their Latin compositions a difficult and abstruse word latinised from the Greek.<sup>2</sup> There are many instances of this pedantry in the early charters of Dugdale's *Monasticon*. But it is nowhere more visible than in the *Life of Saint Wilfrid*, Archbishop of Canterbury, written by Fridegode a monk of Canterbury in Latin heroics, about the year 960.<sup>3</sup> Malmesbury observes of this author's style, "Latinitatem perosus, *Græcitatem amat, Græcula verba frequentat.*"<sup>4</sup> Probably to be able to read Greek at this time was esteemed a knowledge of that language. Eginhart relates, that Charlemagne could speak Latin as fluently as his native Frankish, but slightly passes over his accomplishment in Greek by artfully saying, that he understood it better than he could pronounce it.<sup>5</sup> Nor, by the way, was Charlemagne's boasted facility in the Latin so remarkable a prodigy. The Latin language was familiar to the Gauls when they were conquered by the Franks; for they were a province of the Roman empire till the year 485. It was the language of their religious offices, their laws and public transactions. The Franks, who conquered the Gauls at the period just mentioned, still continued this usage, imagining there was a superior dignity in the language of imperial Rome: although this incorporation of the Franks with the Gauls greatly corrupted the latinity of the latter, and had given it a strong tincture of barbarity before the reign of Charlemagne. But while we are bringing proofs which tend to extenuate the notion that Greek was now much known or cultivated, it must not be dissembled that John Erigena, a native of Ayr in Scotland, and one of King Alfred's first lecturers at Oxford,<sup>6</sup> translated into Latin from the Greek original four large treatises of Dionysius the Areopagite about the year 860.<sup>7</sup> This translation, which is dedicated to Charles the

<sup>1</sup> Cod. MSS. K. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ubi supr.*

<sup>3</sup> Printed by Mabillon, *Sæc. Benedictin.* iii. p. 1, p. 169.

<sup>4</sup> *Gest. Pontific.* i. f. 114.

<sup>5</sup> *Vit. Car. Magn.* p. 30. [In Charlemagne's time the language of everybody in his dominions, except that of the Franks in the north, was no doubt the "rufic" Latin, which could have been understood by a Roman, and became eventually the Romane or French.—*Wright.*]

<sup>6</sup> Wood, *Hist. Antiquit. Univ. Oxon.* i. 15.

<sup>7</sup> This translation, with dedications in verse and prose to Charles the Bald, occurs twice in the Bodleian library, viz. MSS. Mus. 148. And Hyper. Bodl. 148, p. 4, *seq.* See also Laud, I. 59. And in Saint John's College, Oxford, A. xi. 2, 3. William of Malmesbury says, that he wrote a book entitled *Periphyslerismus*, (that is, περὶ φύσεως μεταφυσικόν) and adds, that in this piece "a Latinorum trinitate deviavit, dum in Græcos acriter oculus intendit." *Vit. Aldhelm.* p. 28. Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* ii. It was printed at Oxford by Gale. Erigena, in one of the dedications above mentioned, says, that he had translated into Latin ten of Dionysius's *Epistles*. Hoveden and Matthew Paris have literally transcribed the

Bald, abounds with Greek phraseology, and is hardly intelligible to a mere Latin reader. He also translated into Latin the *Scholia* of Saint Maximus on the difficult passages of Gregory Nazianzen.<sup>1</sup> He frequently visited his munificent patron Charles the Bald, and is said to have taken a long journey to Athens, and to have spent many years in studying not only the Greek but the Arabic and Chaldee languages.<sup>2</sup>

As to classic authors, it appears that not many of them were known or studied by our Saxon ancestors. Those with which they were most acquainted, either in prose or verse, seem to have been of the lower empire: writers who, in the declension of taste, had superseded the purer and more ancient Roman models, and had been therefore more recently and frequently transcribed. I have mentioned Alfred's translations of Boethius and Orosius. Prudentius was also, perhaps, one of their favourites. In the British Museum there is a manuscript copy of that poet's *Psicomachia*. It is illustrated with drawings of historical figures, each of which has an explanatory legend in Latin and Saxon letters; the Latin in large red characters, and the Saxon in black, of great antiquity.<sup>3</sup> Prudentius is likewise in Bennet College library at Cambridge, transcribed in the time of Charles the Bald, with several Saxon words written into the text.<sup>4</sup> Sedulius's hymns are in the same repository in Saxon characters [as usual,] in a volume containing other Saxon manuscripts.<sup>5</sup> Bede says that Aldhelm wrote his book *De Virginitate*, which is both prose and verse, in imitation of the manner of Sedulius.<sup>6</sup> We learn from Gregory of Tours what is not foreign to our purpose to remark, that King Chilperic, who began to reign in 562, wrote two books of Latin verses in imitation of Sedulius. But it was without any idea of the common quantities.<sup>7</sup> A manuscript of this poet in the British Museum is bound up with Nennius and the *Miracles of Saint Guthlac* by Felix, dedicated to Alfwoald, king of the East Angles, and written both in Latin and Saxon.<sup>8</sup> But these classics were most of them read as books of religion and morality. Yet Aldhelm, in his tract *de Metrorum Generibus*, quotes two verses from

---

words of Malmesbury just cited, and much more. Hov. fol. 234. And M. Paris, p. 253. It is doubtful whether the *versio Moralium Aristotelis* is from the Greek: it might be from the Arabic. Or whether our author's. See Praefat. *Op. Nomina*. Oxon. edit. Gale.

<sup>1</sup> Printed at Oxford as above. Erigena died at Malmesbury, where he had opened a school in the year 883. Cave, *Hist. Lit. Sæc. Phot.* p. 548, 549. William of Malmesbury says, that Erigena was one of the wits of Charles the Bald's table, and his constant companion. *Ubi supr.*

<sup>2</sup> Spelm. *Vit. Ælfred.* Bale, xiv. 32. Pits. p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> MSS. Cott. Cleopatr. C. 8, membr. [4to.]

<sup>4</sup> *Miscellan. MSS. M. membran.*

<sup>5</sup> MSS. S. 11, Cod. membran.

<sup>6</sup> *Eccl. Hist.* 19.

<sup>7</sup> *Gregor. Turonens. l. vi. c. 46.*

<sup>8</sup> MSS. Cotton. *Vesp. D. xxi. 8vo.* [The tract by Felix has been printed under the care of Mr. Goodwin, 1848, 8vo. The same gentleman has edited the Anglo-Saxon legends of St. Andrew and St. Veronica, 1851, 8vo.]

the third book of Virgil's *Georgics*:<sup>1</sup> and in the Bodleian Library we find a manuscript of the first book of Ovid's *Art of Love*, in very ancient Saxon characters, accompanied with a British gloss.<sup>2</sup> [In the same repository is the MS. of Persius, with a Latin gloss, presented in 1050 by Bishop Leofric to the cathedral church of Exeter.]<sup>3</sup> These, however, are rare instances. It was the most abominable heresy to have any concern with the pagan fictions. The graces of composition were not their objects, and elegance found no place amidst their severer pursuits in philosophy and theology.<sup>4</sup> The vene-

<sup>1</sup> W. Malmesb. *Vit. Aldhelm.* Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* ii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> NE. D. 19, membr. 8vo. fol. 37. [Respecting this MS. the Rev. H. O. Coxe, keeper of the Bodleian, writes: "The MS. in question is known as the 'St. Dunstan book,' from a drawing of the saint on the first page. It is noticed by Lhuyd, p. 226, and is now marked Auct. F. 4, 32. The Ovid is written in a kind of Lombardic character; it is circ. A. D. 1000. It has interlinear glosses, or rather explanatory words, occasionally, mostly Latin, but here and there words British? as instanced by Lhuyd. These interlineations extend only a little beyond the half of the book. I am not aware that they have been printed."]

<sup>3</sup> [Sir F. Madden's addition.]

<sup>4</sup> Medicine was one of their favourite sciences, being a part of the Arabian learning. We have now remaining Saxon manuscript translations of Apuleius *de Viribus Herbarum*. They have also left a large system of medicine in Saxon, often cited by Somner in his Lexicon under the title of *Liber Medicinalis*. It appears by this tract that they were well acquainted with the Latin physicians and naturalists, Marcellus, Scribonius Largus, Pliny, Cælius Aurelianus, Theodore, Priscus, &c, MSS. Bibl. Reg. Brit. Mus. Cod. membr. . . . It is probable that this manuscript is [not much later than] the age of King Alfred. Among Hatton's books in the Bodleian library is a Saxon manuscript which has been entitled by Junius *Medicina ex Quadrupedibus*. It is pretended to be taken from Idpart, a fabulous king of Egypt. It is followed by two epistles in Latin of Evax, king of the Arabians, to Tiberius Cesar, concerning the names and virtues of oriental precious stones used in medicine. Cod. Hatton. 100, membr. fol. It is believed to be a manuscript before the Conquest. These ideas of a king of Egypt and another of Arabia, and of the use of oriental precious stones in the medical art, evidently betray their origin. Apuleius's *Herbarium* occurs in the British Museum in Latin and Saxon, "quod accepit ab Esculapio et a Chirone Centauro, Magistro Achillis," together with the *Medicina ex Quadrupedibus* above mentioned. MSS. Cot. Vitel. C. iii. Cod. membr. p. 19, iv. p. 75. It is remarkable that the Arabians attribute the invention of Simia, one of their magical sciences, to Kirun or Carun, that is Chiron the centaur, the master of Achilles. See Herbelot. *Dict. Orient.* artic. *Simia*, p. 1005.

The Greeks reputed Chiron the inventor of medicine. His medical books are mentioned by many ancient writers, particularly by Apuleius Celsus *De Herbis*; and Kircher observes that Chiron's treatise of Mulomedicina was familiar to the Arabians. *Oedip. Egypt.* tom. iii. p. 68. Lambecius describes a very curious and ancient manuscript of Dioscorides: among the beautiful illuminations with which it was enriched was a square picture with a gold ground, on which were represented the seven ancient physicians, Machaon, Chiron, Niger, Herculides, Mantias, Xenocrates, and Pamphilus. P. Lambec. *de Bibl. Vindob.* lib. ii. p. 525, seq. I have mentioned above *Medicina ex Quadrupedibus*. A Greek poem or fragment called *Medicina ex Piscibus* has been attributed to Chiron. It was written by Marcellus Sidetas of Pamphylia, a physician under Marcus Antoninus, and is printed by Fabricius, *Bibl. Gr.* i. p. 16, seq. And see xiii. p. 317. The *Medicina ex Quadrupedibus* seems to be the treatise entitled *Medicina ex Animalibus*, under the name of Sextus Platonicus, and printed in Stephens's *Mediceæ Artis Principes*, p. 684. This was a favourite medical system of the dark ages. See Fabric. *ibid.* xiii. 395, xii. 613.

rable Bede, having first invoked the Trinity, thus begins a Latin panegyrical hymn on the miraculous virginity of Ethildryde: "Let Virgil sing of wars, I celebrate the gifts of peace. My verses are of chastity, not of the rape of the adulteress Helen. I will chant heavenly blessings, not the battles of miserable Troy."<sup>1</sup>

It is certain that literature was at its height among our Saxon ancestors about the eighth century. These happy beginnings were almost entirely owing to the attention of King Alfred, who encouraged learning by his own example, by founding seminaries of instruction, and by rewarding the labours of scholars. But the efforts of this pious monarch were soon blasted by the supineness of his successors, the incursions of the Danes, and the distraction of national affairs. Bede, from the establishment of learned bishops in every diocese, and the universal tranquillity which reigned over all the provinces of England, when he finished his ecclesiastical history, flatters his imagination in anticipating the most advantageous consequences, and triumphantly closes his narrative with this pleasing presentiment. The Picts, at this period, were at peace with the Saxons or English, and converted to Christianity. The Scots lived contented within their own boundary. The Britons or Welsh, from a natural enmity and a dislike to the catholic institution of keeping Easter, sometimes attempted to disturb the national repose; but they were in some measure subservient to the Saxons. Among the Northumbrians, both the nobility and private persons rather chose their children should receive the monastic tonsure than be trained to arms.<sup>2</sup>

But a long night of confusion and gross ignorance succeeded. The principal productions of the most eminent monasteries for three centuries were incredible legends which discovered no marks of invention: unedifying homilies and trite expositions of the Scriptures. Many bishops and abbots began to consider learning as pernicious to true piety, and confounded illiberal ignorance with Christian simplicity. Leland frequently laments the loss of libraries destroyed in the Danish invasions.<sup>3</sup> Some slight attempts were made towards restoring literary pursuits, but with little success. In the tenth century, Oswald, Archbishop of York, finding the monasteries of his province extremely ignorant not only in the common elements of grammar, but even in the canonical rules of their respective orders, was obliged to send into France for competent masters who might remedy these evils.<sup>4</sup> In the meantime, from perpetual commotions the manners of the people had degenerated from that mildness which a short interval of peace and letters had introduced, and the national character had contracted an air of rudeness and ferocity.

England at length, in the beginning of the eleventh century,

<sup>1</sup> Bed, *Eccl. Hist.* iv. 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* v. 23.

<sup>3</sup> See Malmesb. *apud Lel. Coll.* i. p. 140, edit. [1770.]

<sup>4</sup> Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* ii. 201. Many evidences of the ignorance which prevailed in other countries during the tenth century have been collected by Muratori, *Antiquit. Ital. Med. Æv.* iii. 831, ii. 141. And Boulay, *Hist. Acad. Paris*, i. 288.

received from the Normans the rudiments of that cultivation which it has preserved to the present times. The Normans were a people who had acquired ideas of splendour and refinement from their residence in France, and the gallantries of their feudal system introduced new magnificence and elegance among our rough unpolished ancestors. The Conqueror's army was composed of the flower of the Norman nobility who, sharing allotments of land in different parts of the new territory, diffused a general knowledge of various improvements entirely unknown in the most flourishing eras of the Saxon government, and gave a more liberal turn to the manners even of the provincial inhabitants. That they brought with them the arts may yet be seen by the castles and churches which they built on a more extensive and stately plan.<sup>1</sup> Literature, in particular, the chief object of our present research, which had long been reduced to the most abject condition, appeared with new lustre in consequence of this important revolution.

Towards the close of the tenth century an event took place which gave a new and very fortunate turn to the state of letters in France and Italy. A little before that time there were no schools in Europe but those which belonged to the monasteries or episcopal churches, and the monks were almost the only masters employed to educate the youth in the principles of sacred and profane erudition. But at the commencement of the eleventh century many learned persons of the laity, as well as of the clergy, undertook in the most capital cities of France and Italy this important charge. The Latin versions of the Greek philosophers from the Arabic had now become so frequent and common as to fall into the hands of the people; and many of these new preceptors, having travelled into Spain with a design of studying in the Arabic schools,<sup>2</sup> and comprehending in their course of instruction more numerous and useful branches of science than the monastic teachers were acquainted with, communicated their knowledge in a better method, and taught in a much more full, perspicuous, solid, and rational manner. These and other beneficial effects, arising from this practice of admitting others besides ecclesiastics to the profession of letters and the education of youth, were imported into England by means of the Norman conquest.

The Conqueror himself patronized and loved letters. He filled the bishoprics and abbeys of England with the most learned of

<sup>1</sup> This point will be further illustrated in a work now preparing for the press, entitled, *Observations Critical and Historical on Castles, Churches, Monasteries, and other Monuments of Antiquity in various Parts of England*. To which will be prefixed, *The History of Architecture in England*. [This production, which Mr. Price of the Bodleian library affirms to have been written out fairly for the press, has not been discovered among the papers of Mr. Warton, though the *prima flamina* were found in a crude state.—Park.]

<sup>2</sup> This fashion continued for a long time. Among many who might here be mentioned was Daniel Merlac, an Englishman who in the year 1185 went to Toledo to learn mathematics, and brought back with him into England several books of the Arabian philosophy. Wood, *Antiq. Univ. Oxon.* i. p. 56, col. i.

his countrymen, who had been educated at the University of Paris, at that time the most flourishing school in Europe. He placed Lanfranc, abbot of the monastery of Saint Stephen at Caen, in the see of Canterbury: an eminent master of logic, the subtleties of which he employed with great dexterity in a famous controversy concerning the real presence. Anselm, an acute metaphysician and theologian, his immediate successor in the same see, was called from the government of the abbey of Bec in Normandy. Herman, a Norman bishop of Salisbury, founded a noble library in the ancient cathedral of that see.<sup>1</sup> Many of the Norman prelates, preferred in England by the Conqueror, were polite scholars. Godfrey, prior of Saint Swithin's at Winchester, a native of Cambray, was an elegant Latin epigrammatist, and wrote with the smartness and ease of Martial.<sup>2</sup> A circumstance, which by the way shews that the literature of the monks at this period was of a more liberal cast than that which we commonly annex to their character and profession. Geoffrey, a learned Norman, was invited from the University of Paris by Richard abbot of St. Alban's, to superintend the school there: but arriving too late, the school was given to another person; Geoffrey, still expecting the office, established himself at Dunstable, where he com-

<sup>1</sup> "Nobilem bibliothecam, comparatis in hoc optimis juxta ac antiquissimis illustrium autorum monumentis, Severi posuit." Leland. *Script. Brit.* p. 174. He died 1099. He was so fond of letters, that he did not disdain to bind and illuminate books. *Mon. Angl.* iii. p. 375, vid. *supr.* The old church of Salisbury stood within the area of that noble ancient military work, called Old-castle. Leland says, that he finished the church which his predecessor had begun, and filled its chapter with eminent scholars.

<sup>2</sup> Camden has cited several of his epigrams. *Remains*, p. 421, edit. 1674. I have read all his pieces now remaining. The chief of them are, *Proverbia et Epigrammata Satyrica*; *Carmina Historica de Rege Canuto, Regina Emma, &c.* Among these is an eulogy on Walkelin, bishop of Winchester, and a Norman, who built great part of his stately cathedral, as it now stands, and was bishop there during Godfrey's priorate, viz. :

"Confilium, virtutis amor, facundia comis,  
Walcheline pater, fixa fuere tibi.  
Corrector juvenum, senibus documenta ministrans,  
Exemplo vitæ pector utrosque regis.  
Pes fueras claudis, cæcis imitabile lumen,  
Portans invalidos, qui cecidere levans.  
Divitiis dominus, facilis largitor earum,  
Dum reficis multos, deficitis ipse tibi," &c.

Among the Epigrams, the following is not cited by Camden :

"Pauca Titus pretiosa dabat, sed vilia plura:  
Ut meliora habeam, pauca det, oro, Titus."

These pieces are in the Bodleian Library, MSS. Digb. 65, *ut* 112. [They are all now printed in Mr. Wright's collection of the Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets and Epigrammatists of the twelfth century, in the series published under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. A few specimens had already been printed by Mr. Wright (*Biographia Britannia Literaria*, Anglo-Norman period, 1846, pp. 35-6).] Leland mentions his epistles "familiari illo et dulci stylo editæ." *Script. Brit.* p. 159. Godfrey died 1107. He was made prior of Winchester A. D. 1082. Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* i. 324. He was interred in the old chapter-house, whose area now makes part of the dean's garden.

posed the miracle play of St. Catharine, for the decoration of which he borrowed copies from St. Alban's: but on the following night his house, together with the copies and all his books, was burned. This was perhaps the first spectacle of the kind that was ever attempted, and the first trace of theatrical representation which appeared in England. Matthew Paris, who first records this anecdote, says that Geoffrey borrowed copies from the sacrist of the neighbouring abbey of Saint Alban's to dress his characters. Geoffrey was afterwards [upon Abbot Richard's death] elected abbot of that opulent monastery.<sup>1</sup>

The king himself gave no small countenance to the clergy in sending his son Henry Beauclerc to the abbey of Abingdon, where he was initiated in the sciences under the care of the abbot, [probably Rainald or Reginaldus, who succeeded in 1084. It is also said that a later abbot, Faricius, a monk of Malmesbury, who was made abbot in 1100, had some share in the education of the young prince, to whom, when king, he owed his elevation to the abbacy.] Robert [de Oili], constable of Oxford castle, was ordered to pay for the board of the young prince in the convent, which the king himself frequently visited.<sup>2</sup> Nor was William wanting in giving ample revenues to learning: he founded the magnificent abbeys of Battel and Selby, with other smaller convents. His nobles and their successors co-operated with this liberal spirit in erecting many monasteries. Herbert de Losinga, a monk of Normandy, bishop of Thetford in Norfolk, instituted and endowed with large possessions a Benedictine abbey at Norwich, consisting of sixty monks. To mention no more instances, such great institutions of persons dedicated to religious and literary leisure, while they diffused an air of civility, and softened the manners of the people in their respective circles, must have afforded powerful invitations to studious pursuits, and have consequently added no small degree of stability to the interests of learning.

By these observations, and others which have occurred in the course of our enquiries, concerning the utility of monasteries, I certainly do not mean to defend the monastic system. We are apt to pass a general and undistinguishing censure on the monks, and to suppose their foundations to have been the retreats of illiterate indolence at every period of time. But it should be remembered that our universities about the time of the Norman conquest were in a low condition, while the monasteries contained ample endowments and accommodations, and were the only respectable seminaries of literature. A few centuries afterwards, as our universities began to flourish, in consequence of the distinctions and honours which they conferred on scholars, the establishment of colleges, the introduction of new systems of science, the universal ardour which prevailed of breeding almost all persons to letters, and the abolition of

<sup>1</sup> [The text has here been corrected by means of Mr. Douce's notes.] *Vit. Abbat.* ad calc. *Hist.* p. 56, edit. 1639. See also *Bul. Hist. Acad. Paris*, ii. 225.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. Antiq. Univ. Oxon.* i. 46; [Dugdale, *Monast. Anglic.* ed. 1817, i. 506.]

that exclusive right of teaching which the ecclesiastics had so long claimed, the monasteries of course grew inattentive to studies which were more strongly encouraged, more commodiously pursued, and more successfully cultivated in other places; they gradually became contemptible and unfashionable as nurseries of learning, and their fraternities degenerated into sloth and ignorance. The most eminent scholars whom England produced, both in philosophy and humanity, before and even below the twelfth century, were educated in our religious houses. The encouragement given in the English monasteries for transcribing books, the scarcity of which in the middle ages we have before remarked, was very considerable. In every great abbey there was an apartment called the Scriptorium, where many writers were constantly busied in transcribing not only the service-books for the choir, but books for the library.<sup>1</sup> The scriptorium of Saint Alban's abbey was built by abbot Paul, a Norman, who ordered many volumes to be written there, about the year 1080. Archbishop Lanfranc furnished the copies.<sup>2</sup> Estates were often granted for the support of the scriptorium. That at Saint Edmondsbury was endowed with two mills.<sup>3</sup> The tithes of a rectory were appropriated to the cathedral convent of Saint Swithin at Winchester, *ad libros transcribendos*, in the year 1171.<sup>4</sup> Many instances of this species of benefaction occur from the tenth century. Nigel, in the year 1160, gave the monks of Ely two churches, *ad libros faciendos*.<sup>5</sup> This employment appears to have been diligently practised at Croyland, for Ingulphus relates that, when the library of that convent was burnt in the year 1091, seven hundred volumes were consumed.<sup>6</sup> Fifty-eight volumes were transcribed at Glastonbury during the government of one abbot, about the year 1300;<sup>7</sup> and in the library of this monastery, the richest in England, there were upwards of four hundred volumes in the year 1248.<sup>8</sup> More than eighty books were thus transcribed for Saint Alban's abbey by abbot Wethamstede, who

<sup>1</sup> This was also a practice in the monasteries abroad, in which the boys and novices were chiefly employed. But the missals and bibles were ordered to be written by monks of mature age and discretion. *Du Frefne, Glos. Lat. Med. v. Scriptorium.* And *Præf. f. vi. edit. prim.* See also *Monas. Angl. ii. 726.* And references in the windows of the library of Saint Alban's Abbey. *Ibid. 183.* At the foundation of Winchester College, one or more transcribers were hired and employed by the founder to *make books* for the library. They transcribed and took their commons within the college, as appears by computations of expenses on their account now remaining.

<sup>2</sup> *Mat. Paris, p. 1003.* See *Leland, Script. Brit. p. 166.*

<sup>3</sup> *Registr. Nigr. S. Edmund. Abbat. fol. 228.*

<sup>4</sup> *Registr. Joh. Pontissar. episcop. Wint. f. 164, MS.* See *Mon. Angl. i. 131.* Heming. *Chartul. per Hearne, p. 265.* Compare also *Godwin, de Præf. p. 121, edit. 1616.*

<sup>5</sup> *Wharton, Angl. Sacr. i. p. 619.* See also pp. 634 and 278. Hearne has published a grant from R. De Paston to Bromholm Abbey in Norfolk of 12*d.* per annum, a rent-charge on his lands, to keep their books in repair, *ad emendacionem librorum.* *Ad. Domerham, Num. iii.*

<sup>6</sup> *Hift. Croyland. Dec. Script. p. 98.*

<sup>7</sup> *Tanner, Not. Mon. edit. 8vo. Pref.*

<sup>8</sup> See *Joann. Glaston. ut infr.,* and *Leland, Script. Brit. p. 131.*

died about 1440.<sup>1</sup> Some of these instances are rather below our period; but they illustrate the subject, and are properly connected with those of more ancient date. I find some of the classics written in the English monasteries very early. Henry, a Benedictine monk of Hyde abbey near Winchester, transcribed in the year 1178 Terence, Boethius,<sup>2</sup> Suetonius,<sup>3</sup> and Claudian. Of these he formed one book, illuminating the initials, and forming the brazen bosses of the covers with his own hands.<sup>4</sup> But this abbot had more devotion than taste, for he exchanged this manuscript a few years afterwards for four missals, *the Legend of Saint Christopher* and *Saint Gregory's Pastoral Care*, with the prior of the neighbouring cathedral convent.<sup>5</sup> Benedict, abbot of Peterborough, author of the Latin chronicle of King Henry II., amongst a great variety of scholastic and theological treatises, transcribed Seneca's epistles and tragedies,<sup>6</sup> Terence, Martial,<sup>7</sup> and Claudian, to which I will add *Gesta Alexandri*,<sup>8</sup> about the year 1180.<sup>9</sup> In a catalogue of the books of the library of Glaston-

<sup>1</sup> Weever, *Fun. Mon.* p. 566.

<sup>2</sup> It is observable that Boethius in his metres constantly follows Seneca's tragedies. I believe there is not one form of verse in Boethius but what is taken from Seneca.

<sup>3</sup> Suetonius is frequently cited by the writers of the middle ages, particularly by Vincentius Bellovacensis. *Specul. Hist.* lib. x. c. 67, and Rhabanus Maurus, *Art. Gram.* Op. tom. i. p. 46. Luper, abbot of Ferrieres, about the year 838, a learned philosophical writer, educated under Rhabanus Maurus, desires Abbot Marquard to send him Suetonius *On the Cæsars*, "in duos nec magnos codices divisum." *Epistol.* Lup. Ferrariens. xcix., apud Andr. Du Chesne, *Script. Rer. Franc.* tom. ii. p. 726. Isidorus Hispalensis, a bishop of the seventh century, gives the origin of poetry from Suetonius, (*Origin.* viii. 7.) Chaucer's tale of Nero in the *Monk's Tale* is taken from Suetonius, "as tellith us Suetonius," v. 491.

<sup>4</sup> "Suis manibus apices literarum artificiose pinxit et illuminavit, necnon æreos umbones in tegminibus appinxit." MS. Registr. Priorat. S. Swithin, Winton. Quatern. . . . In archiv. Wulves. Many of the monks were skilful illuminators. They were also taught to bind books. In the year 1277 these constitutions were given to the Benedictine monasteries of the province of Canterbury: "Abbates monachos suos claustrales, loco operis manualis, secundum suam habilitatem cæteris occupationibus deputent: in studendo, libros scribendo, corrigendo, illuminando, ligando." *Capit. Gen. Ord. Benedictin. Provinc. Cant.* 1277, apud MSS. Br. Twyne, 8vo. p. 272, archiv. Oxon.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>6</sup> Nicholas Antonio says that Nicholas Franeth, a Dominican, illustrated Seneca's tragedies with a gloss soon after the year 1300. *Bibl. Vet. Hispan.*, apud Fabric. *Bibl. Lat.* lib. ii. c. 9. He means Nicholas Trivet, an English Dominican, author of the *Annals* published by Anthony Hall.

<sup>7</sup> John of Salisbury calls Martial *Coccus* (*Politicat.* vi. 3), as do several writers of the middle ages. Martial is cited by Jerom of Padua, a Latin poet and physician, who flourished about the year 1300. See Christian. Daumii *Not. ad Catonis Distich.* p. 140. One of the two famous manuscripts of Terence in the Vatican is said to have been written in the time, perhaps under the encouragement, of Charlemagne, and to have been compared with the more ancient copies by Calliopius Scholasticus, Fontanini. *Vindic. Antiquit. Diplomat.* p. 37. *Scholasticus* means a master in the ecclesiastical schools. Engelbert, abbot of Trevoux, a writer of the tenth century, mentions *Terentius Poeta*, but in such a manner as shows he had but little or no knowledge of him. He confounds this poet with Terentius the Roman senator, whom Scipio delivered from prison at Carthage and brought to Rome. *Bibl. Patr.* tom. xxv. edit. Lugd. p. 370.

<sup>8</sup> See sect. iii. *infr.*

<sup>9</sup> Swaffham, *Hist. Cœnob. Burg.* ii. p. 97, per Jos. Sparke. "Epitole Senecæ cum aliis Senecæ in uno volumine, Martialis totus et Terentius in uno volumine,"

bury<sup>1</sup> we find Livy,<sup>2</sup> Sallust,<sup>3</sup> Seneca, Tully *De Senectute* and *De Amicitia*,<sup>4</sup> Virgil, Persius, and Claudian, in the year 1248. Among the royal manuscripts of the British Museum is one of the twelve books of Statius's *Thebaid*, supposed to have been written in the tenth century, which once belonged to the cathedral convent of Rochester.<sup>5</sup> And another of Virgil's *Eneid*, written in the thirteenth, which came from the library of Saint Austin's at Canterbury.<sup>6</sup> Wallingford, abbot of Saint Alban's, gave or sold from the library of that monastery to Richard of Bury, bishop of Durham, author of the *Philobiblon*, and a great collector of books, Terence, Virgil, Quintilian, and Jerom against Rufinus, together with thirty-two other volumes valued at fifty pounds of silver.<sup>7</sup> The scarcity of

&c. sub. tit. *De Libris ejus*. He died in 1293. In the library of Peterborough Abbey, at the Dissolution, there were one thousand and seven hundred books in manuscript. Gunton's *Peterb.* p. 173.

<sup>1</sup> See *Chron.* Joh. Glaston. edit. Hearne, viz. *Numerus Librorum Glastoniensis ecclesiae qui fuerunt de libraria anno gracie M.CC.XL.VII.* p. 423. Leland, who visited all the monasteries just before their dissolution, seems to have been struck with the venerable air and amplitude of this room. *Script. Brit.* p. 196. See what is said of the monastic libraries above.

<sup>2</sup> It is pretended that Gregory the Great, in the year 580, ordered all the manuscripts of Livy to be burnt which could be found, as a writer who enforced the doctrine of prodigies. By the way, Livy himself often insinuates his disbelief of those superstitions. He studies to relate the most ridiculous portents; and he only meant, when it came in his way, to record the credulity of the people, not to propagate a belief of such absurdities. It was the superstition of the people, not of the historian. Antonio Beccatelli is said to have purchased of Poggio a beautiful manuscript of Livy, for which he gave the latter a large field, in the year 1455. Gallæs. *De Bibliothecis*, p. 186. See Liron, *Singularités Hist. et Litt.* tom. i. p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> Fabricius mentions two manuscripts of Sallust, one written in the year 1178, and the other in the year 900. *Bibl. Lat.* l. i. c. 9. Sallust is cited by a Byzantine writer, Joannes Antiochenus, of an early century. *Excerpt. Peirej.* p. 393.

<sup>4</sup> Paulus Jovius says that Poggio, about the year 1420, first brought Tully's books *De Finibus* and *De Legibus* into Italy, transcribed by himself from other manuscripts. Vols. *Hist. Lat.* p. 550. About the same time Brutus *de Claris Oratoribus*, and some of the rhetorical pieces, with a complete copy of *De Oratore*, were discovered and circulated by Flavius Blondus and his friends. Flav. Blond. *Ital. Illustrat.* p. 346. Leland says that William Selling, a monk of Canterbury, about 1480, brought with him from Italy Cicero's book *De Republica*, but that it was burnt with other manuscripts. *Script. Brit.* Cellingus.

<sup>5</sup> 15 C. x. 1.

<sup>6</sup> 15 B. vi.

<sup>7</sup> *Vit. Abbat. S. Albani.* Brit. Mus. MSS. Cotton. Claud. E. iv. In the royal manuscripts, in John of Salisbury's [Euthatius] there is written, "Hunc librum fecit dominus Symon abbas S. Albani: quem postea venditum domino Ricardo de Bury, episcopo Dunelmensi, emit Michael abbas S. Albani ab executoribus predicti episcopi, A. D. 1345." MSS. 13 D. iv. 3. Richard de Bury, otherwise called Richard Aungerville, is said to have alone possessed more books than all the bishops of England together. Besides the fixed libraries which he had formed in his several palaces, the floor of his common apartment was so covered with books that those who entered could not with due reverence approach his presence. *Gul. Chambre, Contin. Hist. Dunelm.* apud Whart. *Angl. Sacr.* i. 765. He kept binders, illuminators, and writers in his palaces. "Antiquariorum, scriptorum, correctorum, colligatorum, illuminatorum," &c. *Philobibl.* cap. viii. p. 34, edit. 1599. Petrarch says that he had once a conversation with Aungerville concerning the island called by the ancients Thule, whom he calls *Virum ardentis ingenii*. *Petrarch Epist.* i. 3. His book entitled [*Liber de amore librorum, qui dicitur PHILOBIBLON*,] supposed

parchment undoubtedly prevented the transcription of many other books in these societies. About the year 1120 one master Hugh, being appointed by the convent of Saint Edmondsbury in Suffolk to write and illuminate a grand copy of the Bible for their library, could procure no parchment for this purpose in England.<sup>1</sup>

In consequence of the taste for letters and liberal studies introduced by the Normans, many of the monks became almost as good critics as catholics: and not only in France but in England, a great variety of Latin writers, who studied the elegances of style and the arts of classical composition, appeared soon after the Norman conquest. A view of the writers of this class who flourished in England for the two subsequent centuries, till the restless spirit of novelty brought on an attention to other studies, necessarily follows

to be really written by Robert Holcott, a Dominican friar, was finished in his manor of Aukland, A. D. 1343. He founded a library at Oxford; and it is remarkable that in the book above mentioned he apologises for admitting the poets into his collection. "Quare non negleximus fabulas Poetarum." Cap. xiii. p. 43, xviii. p. 57, xix. 58. But he is more complaisant to the prejudices of his age, where he says that the laity are unworthy to be admitted to any commerce with books. "Laici omnium librorum communione sunt indigni." Cap. xvii. p. 55. He prefers books of the liberal arts to treatises in law. Cap. xi. p. 41. He laments that good literature had entirely ceased in the University of Paris. Cap. ix. p. 38. He admits *Panfletos exigui* into his library. Cap. viii. 30. He employed *Statuarios* and *Librarios* not only in England, but in France, Italy, and Germany. Cap. x. p. 34. He regrets the total ignorance of the Greek language, but adds that he has provided for the students of his library both Greek and Hebrew grammars. *Ibid.* p. 40. He calls Paris the *paradise of the world*, and says that he purchased there a variety of invaluable volumes in all sciences, which yet were neglected and perishing. Cap. viii. p. 31. While chancellor and treasurer of England, instead of the usual presents and new-year's gifts appendant to his office, he chose to receive those perquisites in books. By the favour of Edward the Third he gained access to the libraries of the most capital monasteries, where he shook off the dust from volumes preserved in chests and presses which had not been opened for many ages. *Ibid.* 29, 30. [To this note it may be added from Bp. Godwin (*Cat. of Eng. Bishops*, 1601, pp. 524-5), as has been suggested by Mr. Dibdin (*Bibliom.* 1811, p. 248), that De Bury was the son of Sir Richard Angaruill, knt.; that he said of himself, "extatice quodam librorum amore potenter ie abruptum"—that he was mightily carried away, and even beside himself, with immoderate love of books and desire of reading. He had always in his house many chaplains, all great scholars. His manner was at dinner and supper-time to have some good book read to him, whereof he would discourse with his chaplains a great part of the day following, if busines interrupted not his course. He was very bountiful unto the poor: weekly he bestowed for their relief eight quarters of wheat made into bread, beside the offal and fragments of his tables. Riding between Newcastle and Durham he would give 8*l.* in alms, and from Durham to Stockton 5*l.*, &c. He bequeathed a valuable library of MSS. to Durham, now Trinity College, Oxford; and upon the completion of the room to receive them, they were put into pews or studies, and chained to them. See Gutch's edit. of Wood's *Hist. of the Univ. of Oxf.* ii. 911.—*Park.*]

<sup>1</sup> *Monast. Angl.* i. p. 200. In the great revenue-roll of one year of John Gervyes, bishop of Winchester, I find expended "in parchamento empto ad rotulos, vs." This was a considerable sum for such a commodity in the year 1266. But as the quantity or number of the rolls is not specified, no precise conclusion can be drawn. Comp. MS. Membran. in archiv. Wulves. Winton. Compare Anderson, *Comm.* i. 153, *sub ann.* 1313.

from what has been advanced, and naturally forms the conclusion of our present investigation.

Soon after the accession of the Conqueror, [a mysterious author, whom we find] commonly called Joannes Grammaticus, [but of whose individual existence there is strong reason to be suspicious], having studied polite literature at Paris, which not only from the Norman connexion, but from the credit of its professors, became the fashionable university of our countrymen, was employed in educating the sons of the Norman and English nobility.<sup>1</sup> He wrote an explanation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,<sup>2</sup> and a treatise on the art of metre or versification.<sup>3</sup> Among the manuscripts of the library of New College in Oxford, I have seen a book of Latin poetry, and many pieces in Greek, attributed to this writer.<sup>4</sup> He flourished about the year 1070. In the reign of Henry I., Laurence, prior of the church of Durham, wrote nine books of Latin elegies. But Leland, who had read all his works, prefers his compositions in oratory; and adds, that for an improvement in rhetoric and eloquence he frequently exercised his talents in framing Latin defences on dubious cases which occurred among his friends. He likewise, amongst a variety of other elaborate pieces on saints, confessors, and holy virgins, in which he humoured the times and his profession, composed a critical treatise on the method of writing Epistles, which appears to have been a favourite subject.<sup>5</sup> He died in 1154.<sup>6</sup> About the same time, Robert of Dunstable, a monk of Saint Albans, wrote an elegant Latin poem in elegiac verse, containing two books,<sup>7</sup> on the life of Saint Alban.<sup>8</sup> The first book is opened thus :

<sup>1</sup> See Bale, iv. 40. [Several writers place immediately after the Conquest an English grammarian, whom they name Johannes Grammaticus, and to whom they attribute various works, which were certainly written by other persons. As far as I have been able to discover, this writer is a mere creature of the imagination, made out of the names of Johannes Philoponus, Johannes Guallenfis, and Johannes de Garlandia, some of whose writings have been attributed to an imaginary personage, because they happen to be found under the simple name of Magister Johannes.—Wright, *Biog. Brit. Lit. A-N.* per. p. 48.]

<sup>2</sup> *Integumenta super Ovidii Metamorphoses.* MSS. Bibl. Bodl. sup. A 1. art. 89. Where it is given to Johannes Guallenfis, a Franciscan friar of Oxford, and afterwards a student at Paris. It is also in MSS. Digb. 104, fol. 323. The same piece is extant under the name of this latter John, entitled *Expositiones five moralitates in Lib. 1. Metamorphoseos five Fabularum, &c.* Printed at Paris, 1599. But this Johannes Guallenfis seems to have been chiefly a philosopher and theologist. He flourished about A.D. 1250. Alexander Neckam wrote in *Metamorphosis Ovidii.* Tann. Bibl. p. 540.

<sup>3</sup> Another title of this piece is, *Poetria magna Johannis Anglici, &c.* Cantabr. MSS. More, 121. It is both in prose and verse. He begins with his panegyric on the university of Paris: “Parifana jubar diffundit gloria clerus.” He likewise wrote *Compendium Grammatices.*

<sup>4</sup> MSS. Bibl. Coll. Nov. Oxon. 236, 237. But these are [by] Joannes Philoponus. See Phot. Bibl. Cod. lxxv. Cave, p. 441, edit. 1.

<sup>5</sup> See what is said of John [de Hauteville] below.

<sup>6</sup> Lel. Script. Brit. pp. 204, 205.

<sup>7</sup> It is a long poem, containing thirteen hundred and sixty lines.

<sup>8</sup> MSS. Cott. Jul. D. iii. 2, Claud. E. 4. There are more of his Latin poems on sacred subjects in the British Museum. But most of them are of an inferior

Albani celebrem coelo terrisque triumphum  
Ruminat inculto carmine Clio rudis.

We are not to expect Leonine rhymes in these writers, which became fashionable some years afterwards.<sup>1</sup> Their verses are of a higher cast, and have a classical turn. The following line, which begins the second book, is remarkably flowing and harmonious, and much in the manner of Claudian :

Pieridum studiis claustris laxare rigorem.

composition, and, as I suppose, of another hand. [There are two prose versions of this legend in Latin, both printed *sive ulla nota*, 4to.; see also under *Lydgate*.]

<sup>1</sup> Leonine verses are said to have been invented and first used by a French monk of Saint Victor at Marseilles, named Leoninus or Leonine, about the year 1135, Pasquier, *Recherch. de la France*, vii. 2, p. 596, 3, p. 600. It is however certain, that rhymed Latin verses were in use much earlier. I have before observed, that the *Schola Salernitana* was published 1100. See Massieu, *Hist. Fr. Poes.* p. 77. Fauchet, *Rec.* pp. 52, 76, seq. And I have seen a Latin poem of four hundred lines, "Moyris Mutii Bergomatis de rebus Bergomensis, Justiniani hujus nominis secundi Byzantii Imperatoris jussu conscriptum, anno a salute nostra 707." The author was the emperor's scribe or secretary. It begins thus :

"Alme Deus, rector qui mundi regna gubernas,  
Nec finis absque modo sedes fluitare supernas."

It is at the end of *Achillis Mutii Theatrum*, Bergami, 1596. Pelloutier has given a very early specimen of Latin rhymes, *Mem. sur la Lang. Celt.* part i. vol. i. ch. xii. p. 20. He quotes the writer of the Life of S. Faron, who relates that Clotarius II. having conquered the Saxons in the beginning of the seventh century, commanded a Latin panegyrical song to be composed on that occasion, which was sung all over France. It is somewhat in the measure of their vernacular poetry, at that time made to be sung to the harp, and begins with this stanza :

"De Clotario est canere rege Francorum  
Qui ivit pugnare cum gente Saxonum  
Quam graviter provenisset missis Saxonum  
Si non fuisset inclitus Faro de gente Burgundionum."

Latin rhymes seem to have been first used in the church-hymns. But Leonine verses are properly the Roman hexameters or pentameters rhymed. And it is not improbable that they took their name from the monk above mentioned, who was the most popular and almost the only Latin poet of his time in France. He wrote many Latin pieces not in rhyme, and in a good style of Latin versification. Particularly a Latin heroic poem in twelve books, containing the history of the bible from the creation of the world to the story of Ruth. Also some elegies, which have a tolerable degree of classic purity. Some suppose that Pope Leo II., about the year 680, a great reformer of the chants and hymns of the church, invented this sort of verse. It is remarkable that Bede, who lived in the eighth century, in his book *De Arte Metrica*, does not seem to have known that rhyme was a common ornament of the church-hymns of his time, many of which he quotes. See *Opp. tom. i. 34, cap. penult.* But this chapter, I think, is all taken from Marius Victorinus, a much older writer. The hymns which Bede quotes are extremely barbarous, consisting of a modulated structure, or a certain number of feet without quantity, like the odes of the minstrels or scalds of that age. "Ut sunt," he says, "carmina vulgarium poetarum." In the mean time we must not forget, that the early French troubadours mentioned a sort of rhyme in their vernacular poetry partly distinguished from the common species, which they call Leonine or Leonime. Thus Gualtier Arbaletrier de Belle-perche, in the beginning of his romance of *Judas Maccabeus*, written before the year 1280 :

"Je ne di pas k' aucun biau dit  
N'i mette pur faire la ryme  
Ou consonante ou leonime."

But enough has been said on a subject of so little importance.

Smoothness of versification was an excellence which, like their Saxon predecessors, they studied to a fault. Henry of Huntingdon, commonly known and celebrated as an historian, was likewise a terse and polite Latin poet of this period. He was educated under Alcuin of Anjou, a canon of Lincoln cathedral. His principal patrons were Aldwin and Reginald, both Normans, and Abbots of Ramsey. His turn for poetry did not hinder his arriving to the dignity of an archdeacon. Leland mentions eight books of his epigrams, amatorial verses,<sup>1</sup> and poems on philosophical subjects.<sup>2</sup> The poem to his book *De Herbis* has this elegant invocation :

Vatum magne parens, herbarum, Phœbe, repertor,  
Vosque, quibus resonant Temp<sup>e</sup> jocosa, de<sup>x</sup>!  
Si mihi ferta prius hedera florente parat<sup>s</sup>,  
Ecce meos flores, ferta parate, fero.

But Leland appears to have been most pleased with Henry's poetical epistle to Elfleda, the daughter of Alfred.<sup>3</sup> In the Bodleian library is a manuscript Latin poem of this writer on the death of King Stephen, and the arrival of Henry II. in England, which is by no means contemptible.<sup>4</sup> He occurs as a witness to the charter of the monastery of Sautree in the year 1147.<sup>5</sup> Geoffrey Monmouth was bishop of Saint Asaph in the year 1152.<sup>6</sup> He was indefatigable in his enquiries after British antiquity ; and was patronised and assisted in this pursuit by Walter [Calenius], archdeacon of Oxford, a diligent antiquarian, and Alexander, bishop of Lincoln.<sup>7</sup> His credulity as an historian has been deservedly censured : but fabulous histories were then the fashion, and he well knew the recommendation his work would receive from comprehending all the popular traditions.<sup>8</sup> His latinity rises far above mediocrity, and his Latin poem on Merlin is much applauded by Leland.<sup>9</sup>

We must not judge of the general state of society by the more ingenious and dignified churchmen of this period; who seem to have surpassed by the most disproportionate degrees, in point of knowledge, all other members of the community. Thomas of Becket, who belongs to the twelfth century, and his friends, in their epistles distinguish each other by the appellation of philosophers, in the course of their correspondence.<sup>10</sup> By the present diffusion of lite-

<sup>1</sup> [See Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* ii. p. 29. [The epigrams and smaller poems of Henry of Huntingdon form the eleventh book of his history in some MSS., and are printed in Mr. Wright's Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets and Epigrammatists of the Twelfth Century. The Twelfth book contains his more serious poetry.—Wright. See Mr. Wright's *Biogr. Brit. Lit.* A-N. period, pp. 168-72.]

<sup>2</sup> Lel. *Script. Brit.* p. 197.

<sup>3</sup> *Ut sapr.*

<sup>4</sup> MSS. Digb. 65, fol. 27. His writings are numerous, and of various kinds. In Trinity College library at Oxford there is a fine copy of his book *De imagine Mundi*. MSS. Cod. 64, parchment. This is a very common manuscript.

<sup>5</sup> Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* ii. 872.

<sup>6</sup> Wharton, *Eccles. Affav.* p. 306.

<sup>7</sup> Leland, *Script. Brit.* p. 190.

<sup>8</sup> See sect. iii. infr.

<sup>9</sup> In the British Museum, MSS. Cott. Tit. A. xix. Vespas. E. iv. [Printed for the Roxburghe Club, 1830. Mr. W. H. Black's preface was cancelled. This work was re-edited by MM. Michel and Wright, 1838, large 8vo. with additional illustrations.]

<sup>10</sup> See *Quadrilog. Vit. T. Becket*, 1682. And *Concil. Mag. Brit. et Hib.* tom. i. p. 441. Many of these epistles are still in manuscript.

rature, even those who are illiterate are yet so intelligent as to stand more on a level with men of professed science and knowledge; but the learned ecclesiastics of those times, as is evident from many passages in their writings, appear, and not without reason, to have considered the rest of the world as totally immersed in ignorance and barbarity. A most distinguished ornament of this age was John of Salisbury.<sup>1</sup> His style has a remarkable elegance and energy. His *Policraticon* is an extremely pleasant miscellany; replete with erudition and a judgment of men and things, which properly belongs to a more sensible and reflecting period. His familiar acquaintance with the classics appears not only from the happy facility of his language, but from the many citations of the purest Roman authors with which his works are perpetually interspersed. Montfaucon asserts that some parts of the supplement to Petronius, published as a genuine and valuable discovery, but [now] supposed to be spurious, are quoted in the *Policraticon*.<sup>2</sup> He was an illustrious rival of Peter of Blois, and the friend of many learned foreigners.<sup>3</sup> I have not seen any specimens of his Latin poetry;<sup>4</sup> but an able judge has pronounced that nothing can be more easy, finished and flowing than his verses.<sup>5</sup> He was promoted to high stations in the church by Henry II., whose court was crowded with scholars, and almost equalled that of his cotemporary William, king of Sicily, in the splendour which it derived from encouraging erudition, and assembling the learned of various countries.<sup>6</sup> Eadmer was a monk of Canterbury, and endeared by the brilliancy of his genius

<sup>1</sup> "Studuit in Italia omnium bonarum artium facile post Graciam parente." Leland, *Script. Brit.* p. 207. But he likewise spent some time at Oxford. *Policrat.* viii. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Bibl. MSS. There is an allusion to the *Policraticon* in the *Roman de la Rose*:

"Et verras en Policratique."—v. 7056.

<sup>3</sup> Lel. *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Except the Fable of the belly and members in long and short. Fabric. *Med. Ev.* iv. p. 877.

<sup>5</sup> Lel. *ut supr.* p. 207. [The Latin poem, of considerable merit, by John of Salisbury, entitled *Euthaticus, de Dogmate Philosophorum*, was edited, with very learned introduction and notes by Prof. Christian Petersen, at Hamburg, in 1843. —Wright.]

<sup>6</sup> See Leland, *Script. Brit.* p. 210. Henry II. sent Gualterus, styled *Anglicus*, his chaplain, into Sicily, to instruct William, king of Sicily, in literature. William was so pleased with his master, that he made him Archbishop of Palermo. *Bale*, xiii. 73. He died in 1177. Peter of Blois was Gualter's coadjutor; and he tells us, that he taught William the rudiments "verificatoria artis et literatoria," *Epist. Petr. Blefens. ad Gualt.* Pitts mentions a piece of Gualterus *De lingue Latinae rudimentis*, p. 141. There is a William of Blois, cotemporary with Peter and his brother, whom I mention here, as he appears to have written what were called *Comœdia et Tragœdia*, and to have been preferred to an abbacy in Sicily. [See *sext. vi. inf.*] Peter mentions this William in his Epistles, "Illiud nobile ingenium fratris mei magistri Gulielmi, quandoque in scribendis Comœdiis et Tragœdiis quadam occupatione servili degenerans," &c. *Epist. lxxvi.* And again to the said William, "Nomen vestrum diuturniore memoria quam quatuor abbatis commendabile reddit Tragœdia vestra de Flaura et Marco, versus de Pulice et Musca, Comœdia vestra de Alda," &c. *Epist. xciii.*

and the variety of his literature to Anselm, archbishop of that see.<sup>1</sup> He was an elegant writer of history, but exceeded in the artifices of composition and the choice of matters by his cotemporary William of Malmesbury. The latter was a monk of Malmesbury, and it reflects no small honour on his fraternity that they elected him their librarian.<sup>2</sup> His merits as an historian have been justly displayed and recommended by Lord Lyttelton.<sup>3</sup> But his abilities were not confined to prose. He wrote many pieces of Latin poetry; and it is remarkable, that almost all the professed writers in prose of this age made experiments in verse. His patron was Robert, earl of Gloucester who, amidst the violent civic commotions which disquieted the reign of King Stephen, found leisure and opportunity to protect and promote literary merit.<sup>4</sup> Till Malmesbury's works appeared, Bede had been the chief and principal writer of English history. But a general spirit of writing history, owing to that curiosity which more polished manners introduce to an acquaintance with the ancient historians, and to the improved knowledge of a language in which facts could be recorded with grace and dignity, was now prevailing. Besides those I have mentioned, Simeon of Durham, Roger of Hoveden, and Benedict, abbot of Peterborough, are historians whose narratives have a liberal cast, and whose details rise far above the dull uninteresting precision of patient annalists and regular chronologers. John [de Hauteville], a monk of Saint Albans, about the year 1190, studied rhetoric at Paris, and was distinguished for his taste even among the numerous and polite scholars of that flourishing seminary.<sup>5</sup> His *Architrenius* is a learned, ingenious, and very entertaining performance. It is a long Latin poem in nine books, dedicated to Walter, bishop of Rouen. The design of the work may be partly conjectured from its affected Greek title: but it is, on the whole, a mixture of satire and panegyric on public vice and virtue, with some historical digressions. In the exordium is the following nervous and spirited address:

Tu Cyrrhae latices nostræ, deus, implue menti;  
Eloquii rorem siccis infunde labellis:  
Distillaque favos, quos nondum pallidus auro  
Scit Tagus, aut sitiens admotis Tantalus undis:  
Dirige quæ timide suscepit dextera, dextram  
Audacein pavidamque juva: Tu mentis habenas  
Fervoremque rege, &c.

<sup>1</sup> Leland, *Script. Brit.* p. 178. There is a poem *De Laudibus Anselmi*, and an epicedion on that prelate, commonly ascribed to Eadmer. See Fabric. *Bibl. Med. Lat.* ii. p. 210 *seq.* Leland doubts whether these pieces belong to him or to William of Chester, a learned monk, patronised by Anselm. *Script. Brit.* p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> Lel. p. 195. But see Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* ii. *Pref.* p. xii.

<sup>3</sup> In his *History of Henry II.*

<sup>4</sup> See Cave, *Hist. Lit.* p. 661.

<sup>5</sup> Lel. p. 259. [See Wright's *Essays on the Literature, &c. of England in the Middle Ages*, 1846, i. 183 *et seq.* 9. Mr. Wright observes to me: 'The correct name was, no doubt, John de Hauteville (de Altavilla); a new edition of his *Architrenius* is given in my *Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets and Epigrammatists of the Twelfth Century*.']

In the fifth book the poet has the following allusions to the fables of Corineus, Brutus, King Arthur, and the population of Britain from Troy. He seems to have copied these traditions from Geoffrey of Monmouth:<sup>1</sup>

Tamen Architrenius instat,  
 Et genus et gentem querit studiosius: illi  
 Tros genus, et gentem tribuit Lodonesia, nutrix  
 Præbuit irriguam morum Cornubia mammam,  
 Post odium fati, Phrygiis inventa: Smaraudus  
 Hanc domitor mundi Tyrinthius, alter Achilles,  
 Atridæque timor Corinæus, serra gygantum,  
 Clavaque monstrifera, sociæ delegit alumnam  
 Omnigenam Trojæ, pluvioque fluviflua lacte  
 Filius exilio fessa dedit ubera matri.  
 A quo dicta prius Corineia, dicitur aucto  
 Tempore corrupte Cornubia nominis hæres.  
 Ille gygantæos attritis offibus artus  
 Implicuit letho, Tyrreni littoris hospes,  
 Indomita virtute gygas; non corpore mole  
 Ad medium preffa, nec membris densior æquo,  
 Sarcina terrifica tumuit Titania mente.  
 Ad Ligeris ripas Aquitanos fudit, et amnes  
 Francorum potuit lacrymis, et cæde vadoque  
 Sanguinis ense ruens, latiavit rura, togaque  
 Punicea vestivit agros, populique verendi  
 Grandiloquos fregit animola cuspide fastus,  
 Integra, nec dubio bellorum naufraga fluætu,  
 Nec vice suspecta titubanti faucia fato,  
 Indilata dedit subitam victoria laurum.  
 Inde dato curfu, Bruto comitatus Achate,  
 Gallorum spolia cumulatus, navibus æquor  
 Exarat, et fuperis auraque faventibus utens,  
 Litora felices intrat Tolonesia portus:  
 Promissumque soli gremium monstrante Diana,  
 Incolumi census loculum ferit Albion alno.  
 Hæc eadem Bruto regnante Britannia nomen  
 Traxit in hoc tempus: solis Titanibus illa,  
 Sed paucis, habitata domus; quibus uda ferarum  
 Terga debant vestes, crux haustus pocula, trunci  
 Antra lares, dumeta toros, cænacula rupes,  
 Præda cibos, raptus venerem, spectacula cædes,  
 Imperium vires, animum furor, impetus arma,  
 Mortem pugna, sepulchra rubus: monstrisque gemebat  
 Monticolis tellus: sed eorum plurima tractus  
 Pars erat occidui terror; majorque premebat  
 Te furor extremum zephyri, Cornubia, limen.  
 Hos avidum belli Corinæi robur Averno  
 Præcipites misit; cubitis ter quatuor altum  
 Gogmagog Herculea suspendit in aere lucta,  
 Anthæumque suum scopulo demisit in æquor:  
 Potavitque dato Thetis ebria sanguine fluctus,  
 Divisumque tulit inare corpus, Cerberus umbram.  
 Nobilis a Phrygiæ tanto Cornubia gentem  
 Sanguine derivat, successio cuius Iulus  
 In generis partem recipit complexa Pelasgam  
 Anchilæque domum: ramos hinc Pandrasus, inde  
 Sylvius extendit, socioque a fidere fidus

<sup>1</sup> See *Hist. Galfrid. Mon. i. xi. xvi. xvii. &c.*

Plenius effundit triplicatæ lampadis ignes.  
 Hoc trifido sola Corinæi postera mundum  
 Præradiat pubes, quartique puerpera Phœbi  
 Pullulat Arthurum, facie dum falsus adulter  
 Tintagel irrumpt, nec amoris Pendragon æstu  
 Vincit, et omnificas Merlini confulit artes,  
 Mentiturque ducis habitus, et rege latente  
 Induit absens præsentia Gorlois ora.<sup>1</sup>

There is a false glare of expression, and no great justness of sentiment, in these verses ; but they are animated, and flow in a strain of poetry. They are pompous and sonorous ; but these faults have been reckoned beauties even in polished ages. In the same book our author thus characterises the different merits of the satires of Horace and Persius :

Persius in Flacci pelago decurrit, et audet  
 Mendicasse stylum satyræ, serraque cruentus  
 Rodit, et ignorat polientem pectora limam.<sup>2</sup>

In the third book he describes the happy parsimony of the Cistercian monks :

O sancta, o felix, albis galeata cucullis,  
 Libera paupertas ! Nudo jejunia pastu  
 Tracta diu solvens, nec corruptura palatum  
 Mollitie mensæ. Bacchus convivia nullo  
 Murmure conturbat, nec sacra cubilia mentis  
 Inquinat adventu. Stomacho languente ministrat  
 Solennes epulas ventris gravis hospita Thetis,  
 Et paleis armata Ceres. Si tertia mensæ  
 Copia succedat, truncantur oluscula, quorum  
 Offendit macies oculos, pacemque meretur,  
 Deterretque famem pallenti sobria cultu.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Milton appears to have been much struck with this part of the ancient British History, and to have designed it for the subject of an epic poem. *Epitaph. Daemonis*, v. 162.

“ Ipse ego Dardanias Rutupina per æquora puppes  
 Dicam, et Pandrosidos regnum vetus Inogeniæ,  
 Brennumque Arviragumque duces, priscumque Belinum,  
 Et tandem Armoricos Britonum sub lege colonos :  
 Tum gravidam Arturo, fatali fraude, Iogernen,  
 Mendaces vultus, assumptaque Gorlois arma,  
 Merlini dolus.”

See also Milton's *Manus*, v. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Juvenal is also cited by John of Salisbury, Peter of Blois, Vincentius Bellovacensis [Vincent of Beauvais,] Geoffrey of Monmouth, and other writers of the middle ages. They often call him Ethicus. See particularly Petr. Bles. *Epist. lxxvii.* Some lines from Juvenal are cited by Honorius Augustodunus, a priest of Burgundy, who wrote about 1300, in his *De Philosophia Mundi*, *Præf. ad lib. iv.* The tenth satire of Juvenal is quoted by Chaucer in *Troilus and Cressida*, b. iv. v. 197. There is an old Italian metaphrase of Juvenal done in 1475, and published [in 1480] by Georgio Summaripa, of Verona. *Giornale de Letterati d'Italia*, tom. viii. p. 41. Juvenal was printed [with the types of Vindelin de Spira as early as 1470.]

<sup>3</sup> There are two manuscripts of this poem, from which I transcribe, in the Bodleian library. MSS. Digb. 64, and 157. One of these has a gloss, but not that of Hugo Legatus, mentioned by Baillet, *Jugem. Sav.* iv. p. 257, edit. 4to. This poem is said to have been printed at Paris 1517. 4to. Bibl. Thuan. tom. ii. p. 286. This edition I have never seen, and believe it to be an extremely scarce book. [Mr.

Among the Digby MSS. in the Bodleian library, are [John de Hauteville's] Latin epigrams, epistles, and smaller poems, many of which have considerable merit<sup>1</sup> [but of which it is questionable whether De Hauteville was really the author.] They are followed by a metrical tract, entitled *De Epistolarum Compositione*. But this piece is written in rhyme, and seems to be posterior to the age, at least inferior to the genius, of Hauteville. He was buried in the abbey church of Saint Alban's, soon after the year 1200.<sup>2</sup>

Giraldus Cambrensis deserves particular regard for the universality of his works, many of which are written with some degree of elegance. He abounds with quotations of the best Latin poets. He was an historian, an antiquary, a topographer, a divine, a philosopher, and a poet. His love of science was so great, that he refused two bishoprics; and from the midst of public business, with which his political talents gave him a considerable connection in the court of Richard the First, he retired to Lincoln for seven years, with a design of pursuing theological studies.<sup>3</sup> He recited his book on the topography of Ireland in public at Oxford for three days successively. On the first day of this recital he entertained all the poor of the city; on the second, all the doctors in the several faculties, and scholars of better note; and on the third, the whole body of students, with the citizens and soldiers of the garrison.<sup>4</sup> It is probable that this was a ceremony practised on the like occasion in the university of Paris,<sup>5</sup> where Giraldus had studied for twenty years, and where

Wright (*Biogr. Brit. Lit. A-N.* per. p. 256) observes: "An edition of *Architrenius* was printed by Johannes Badius Ascensus, in small 4to., Paris, 1517, but is so extremely rare that we have not been able to obtain sight of a copy."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cod. Digb. 64, *ut supr.*

<sup>2</sup> Bale, iii. 49.

<sup>3</sup> Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* ii. 374.

<sup>4</sup> Wood, *Hist. Antiq. Univ. Oxon.* i. 56.

<sup>5</sup> But Wood insinuates, that this sumptuous entertainment was partly given by Giraldus, as an inceptor in the arts. *Ubi supr.* p. 25, col. 1. Which practice I have mentioned, Sect. ix. *infra*. And I will here add other instances, especially as they are proofs of the estimation in which letters, at least literary honours, were held. In the year 1268, the inceptors in civil law at Oxford were so numerous, and attended by such a number of guests, that the academical houses or hostels were not sufficient for their accommodation: and the company filled not only these, but even the refectory, cloisters, and many apartments of Osney Abbey, near the suburbs of Oxford. At which time many Italians studying at Oxford were admitted in that faculty. Wood, *ubi supr.* p. 25, col. 1. It appears that the mayor and citizens of Oxford were constantly invited to these solemnities. In the year 1400, two monks of the priory of Christ Church in Canterbury were severally admitted to the degree of doctor in divinity and civil law at Oxford. The expenses were paid by their monastery, and amounted to 18L 3s. 8d. *Regist. Priorat.* pergamen. MSS. Tanner, Oxon. Num. 165, fol. 212, a. Among other articles there is, "In solutione facta Histronibus," fol. 213, a. [See sect. ii. *infra*.] At length these scholastic banquets grew to such excess, that it was ordered in the year 1434, that no inceptor in arts should expend more than "3000 grossos Turonenses." *Vet. Stat.* See Leland, *Coll.* p. ii. tom. i. pp. 296, 297, edit. 1770. But the limitation was a considerable sum. Each is somewhat less than an English groat. Notwithstanding Neville, afterwards Archbishop of York, on his admission to the degree of master of arts in 1452, feasted the academics and many strangers for two successive days, at two entertain-

he had been elected professor of canon law in the year 1189.<sup>1</sup> His account of Wales was written in consequence of the observations he made on that country, then almost unknown to the English, during his attendance on an archiepiscopal visitation. I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing from this book his picture of the romantic situation of the abbey of Lantony in Monmouthshire. I will give it in English, as my meaning is merely to show how great a master the author was of that selection of circumstances which forms an agreeable description, and which could only flow from a cultivated mind.

“ In the deep vale of Ewias, which is about a bowshot over, and enclosed on all sides with high mountains, stands the abbey church of Saint John, a structure covered with lead, and not unhandsomely built for so lonesome a situation: on the very spot, where formerly stood a small chapel dedicated to Saint David, which had no other ornaments than green moss and ivy. It is a situation fit for the exercise of religion; and a religious edifice was first founded in this sequestered retreat to the honour of a solitary life, by two hermits, remote from the noise of the world, upon the banks of the river Hondy, which winds through the midst of the valley. The rains which mountainous countries usually produce are here very frequent, the winds exceedingly tempestuous, and the winters almost continually dark. Yet the air of the valley is so happily tempered, as scarcely to be the cause of any diseases. The monks sitting in the cloisters of the abbey, when they choose for a momentary refreshment to cast their eyes abroad, have on every side a pleasing prospect of mountains ascending to an immense height, with numerous herds of wild deer feeding aloft on the highest extremity of this lofty horizon. The body of the sun is not visible above the hills till after the meridian hour, even when the air is most clear.” Giraldus adds, that Roger bishop of Salisbury, prime minister to Henry the First, having visited this place, on his return to court told the king, that all the treasure of his Majesty’s kingdom would not suffice to build such another cloister. The bishop explained himself by saying, that he meant the circular ridge of mountains with which the vale of Ewias was enclosed.<sup>2</sup> Alexander Neckam was the friend, the associate, and the correspondent of Peter of Blois already mentioned. He received the

---

ments, consisting of nine hundred costly dishes. Wood, *ibid.* 219, col. 1, 2. Nor was this reverence to learning, and attention to its institutions, confined to the circle of our universities. Such was the pedantry of the times, that in the year 1503, Archbishop Wareham, Chancellor of Oxford, at his feast of inthronisation, ordered to be introduced in the first course a curious dish, in which were exhibited the eight towers of the university. In every tower stood a bedell; and under the towers were figures of the king, to whom the Chancellor Wareham, encircled with many doctors properly habited, presented four Latin verses, which were answered by his majesty. The eight towers were those of Merton, Magdalene, and New College, and of the monasteries of Oseney, Rewley, the Dominican, Augustine, and Franciscan friars, which five last are now utterly destroyed. Wood, *utriusque lib.* i. p. 239, col. i. Compare Robertson’s *Charles V.* i. 323, *seq.*

<sup>1</sup> Wharton, *ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> Girald. Cambren. *Itin. Cambr.* 1585, lib. i. c. 3, p. 89, *seq.*

first part of his education in the abbey of Saint Albans, which he afterwards completed at Paris.<sup>1</sup> His compositions are various, and crowd the department of manuscripts in our public libraries. He has left numerous treatises of divinity, philosophy, and morality: but he was likewise a poet, a philologist, and a grammarian. He wrote a tract on the mythology of the ancient poets, *Aësopian fables*, and a system of grammar and rhetoric. I have seen his elegiac poem on the monastic life,<sup>2</sup> which contains some finished lines. But his capital piece of Latin poetry is on the *Praise of Divine Wisdom*, which consists of seven books.<sup>3</sup> In the introduction, he commemorates the innocent and unreturning pleasures of his early days, which he passed among the learned monks of Saint Alban's, in these perspicuous and unaffected elegiacs:

## Claustrum

Martyris Albani sit tibi tutu quies.  
 Hic locus ætatis nostræ primordia novit,  
 Annos felices, lætitiaeque dies.  
 Hic locus ingenuis pueriles imbuit annos  
 Artibus, et nostræ laudis origo fuit.  
 Hic locus insignes magnosque creavit alumnos,  
 Felix eximio martyre, gente, situ.  
 Militat hic Christo, noctuque dieque labori  
 Indulget sancto religiosa cohors.<sup>4</sup>

Neckam died abbot of Cirencester in the year 1217.<sup>5</sup> He was much attached to the studious repose of the monastic profession, yet he frequently travelled into Italy.<sup>6</sup> Walter Mapes, archdeacon of Oxford, has been styled [without much real propriety] the Anacreon of the eleventh century.<sup>7</sup> He studied at Paris.<sup>8</sup> His vein was chiefly festive and satirical:<sup>9</sup> and as his wit was frequently levelled against the corruptions of the clergy, his poems often appeared under fictitious names, or have been ascribed to others.<sup>10</sup> The [so-called] drinking ode<sup>11</sup> [attributed to] this genial archdeacon [which is in fact nothing more than verses of a longer poem strung together] has the

<sup>1</sup> Lel. *Script. Brit.* p. 240, *seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Bibl. Bodl. MSS. Digb. 65, f. 18.

<sup>3</sup> [It has been edited by Mr. T. Wright in his edition of Neckam's prose treatise *De Naturis Rerum*.]

<sup>4</sup> *Apud Lel. Script. Brit.* p. 240.

<sup>5</sup> Willis, *Mitr. Abb.* i. 61, 62.

<sup>6</sup> Lel. *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Lord Lyttelton's *Hist. Hen. II.* Not. B. ii. p. 133, 4to. [But the reader should be cautioned against the implicit reception of Warton's statements in this case, since it seems very doubtful whether Mapes was really the writer of the poems which commonly pass under his name. See *Poems attributed to Walter Mapes*, ed. Wright, *Introd.*]

<sup>8</sup> See *infra*, sect. ii.

<sup>9</sup> Tanner, *Bibl.* p. 507.

<sup>10</sup> Cave, *Hist. Lit.* p. 706. Compare Tanner, *Bibl.* 351, 507. In return, many pieces went under the name of our author. As, for instance, *De Thetide et de Lyæo*, which is a ridiculous piece of scurrility. MSS. Bibl. Bodl. Digb. 166, f. 104.

<sup>11</sup> See *Camd. Rem.* p. 436. *Rythmi.* [Mr. T. Wright's correction. That gentleman also notes that the poem occurs in Harl. MS. 2851, and is there called *Goliardus de vite sue multicione*. A parody on this song is in Sloane MS. 2595, early fifteenth cent., and is printed in Wright's *Songs and Carols*, 1856 (Warton Club), p. 92.]

regular returns of the monkish rhyme: but they are here applied with a characteristic propriety, are so happily invented, and so humorously introduced, that they not only suit the genius but heighten the spirit of the piece.<sup>1</sup> He boasts that good wine inspires him to sing verses equal to those of Ovid. In another Latin ode, he attacks with great liveliness the new injunction of Pope Innocent, concerning the celibacy of the clergy, and hopes that every married priest with his bride will say a *pater noster* for the soul of one who had thus hazarded his salvation in their defence:

Ecce jam pro clericis multum allegavi,  
Necon pro presbyteris plura comprobavi:  
Pater Noster nunc pro me, quoniam peccavi,  
Dicat quisque Presbyter cum sua Suavi.<sup>2</sup>

But a miracle of this age in classical composition was Joseph of Exeter, commonly called *Josephus Iscanus*. He wrote two epic poems in Latin heroics.<sup>3</sup> The first is on the Trojan War; it is in six books, and dedicated to Baldwin, archbishop of Canterbury.

<sup>1</sup> [Mapes's *Treatise De Nugis Curialium* has been printed under the editorship of Mr. T. Wright, 1850, 4to., from the unique Bodleian MS., a very incorrect one, Mr. Wright says. Mr. W. remarks: "It is divided into five books or *Distinctiones*, and forms a singular medley of various subjects. Mapes tells us that it was written at the court by snatches (*raptim*) at different times, and under different circumstances (between 1182 and 1189.)"] Many Latin poems in this manuscript are given to Mapes. One in particular, written in a flowing style, in short lines, preserving no fixed metrical rule, which seems to have been intended for singing. In another manuscript I find various pieces of Latin poetry, by some attributed to Mapes, Bibl. Bodl. NE. F. iii. Some of these are in a good taste.

[It appears from several of the MS. copies of *Lancelot du Lac*, *Le Saint Graal*, and other romances, that Walter de Mapes translated them into French prose, at the instance of Henry II. He also composed [it has been said] the *Morte Arthur*, at the particular desire of that monarch. Many of his poems remain in MS. (See Index to Harl. MSS. Some of them have been printed in Leyser, *Hist. Poetarum mediæ aëvi*, in *Flacius de corrupto ecclesiæ statu*, Basil, 1557, and in Wolfius, *Lectiones memorabiles*. There is reason to suppose that a piece entitled variously as follows, was written by him: "Visio lamentabilis cujusdam heremitæ super disceptatione animæ contra corpus. Disputatio inter corpus et animam alicuius repatit et damnavi: Conflictio inter corpus et animam." See Harl. MSS. 978, 2851. Cotton MSS. Titus, A. xx.—*Douce*. There is however reason to believe that Mapes only gave a Latin version of a very popular theme. See the same idea exemplified in a Saxon poem from the Exon MS. given by Mr. Conybeare in the *Archæologia*, vol. 17.—*Price.*]

<sup>2</sup> *Camd. Rem. ut supr.*

<sup>3</sup> [There are translations in the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow.—F.]

See lib. i. 32. It was first printed at Basil, but very corruptly, in the year 1541, under the name of Cornelius Nepos. The existence and name of this poem seem to have been utterly unknown in England when Leland wrote. He first met with a manuscript copy of it by mere accident in Magdalen College Library at Oxford. He never had even heard of it before. He afterwards found two more copies at Paris. But these were all imperfect, and without the name of the author, except a marginal hint. At length he discovered a complete copy of it in the library of Thorney Abbey, in Cambridgeshire, which seems to have ascertained the author's name, but not his country. *Script. Brit.* p. 238. The neglect of this poem among our ancestors, I mean in the ages which followed Iscanus, appears from the few manuscripts of it now remaining in England. Leland, who searched

The second is entitled *Antiochis*, the War of Antioch, or the Crusade; in which his patron the archbishop was an actor.<sup>1</sup> The poem of the Trojan war is founded on *Dares Phrygius*, a favourite fabulous historian of that time.<sup>2</sup> The diction of this poem is generally pure, the periods round, and the numbers harmonious: and, on the whole, the structure of the versification approaches nearly to that of polished Latin poetry. The writer appears to have possessed no common command of poetical phraseology, and wanted nothing but a knowledge of the Virgilian chastity. His style is a mixture of Ovid, Statius, and Claudian, who seem then to have been the popular patterns.<sup>3</sup> But a few specimens will best illustrate this criticism. He thus, in a strain of much spirit and dignity, addresses King Henry II., who was going to the holy war,<sup>4</sup> the intended subject of his *Antiochis*:

Tuque, oro, tuo da, maxime, vati  
Ire iter inceptum, Trojamque aperire jacentem :  
Te sacrae afflum acies, divinaque bella,  
Tunc dignum majore tuba; tunc pectore toto  
Nitar, et immensum mecum spargere per orbem.<sup>5</sup>

The tomb or mausoleum of Teuthras is feigned with a brilliancy of

all our libraries, could find only two. There is at present one in the church of Westminster. Another in Bibl. Bodl. Digb. 157. That in Magdalen College is MSS. Cod. 50. The best edition is at the end of *Dixit Cretensis et Dares Phrygius*. Amstæl. 1702. But all the printed copies have omitted passages which I find in the Digby manuscript. Particularly they omit, in the address to Baldwin, four lines after v. 32, lib. i. Thirteen lines, in which the poet alludes to his intended *Antiochis*, are omitted before v. 962, lib. vi. Nor have they the verses in which he compliments Henry the Second, said by Leland to be at the end of the fourth book, *Script. Brit.* p. 238. The truth is, these passages would have betrayed their first editor's pretence of this poem being written by Cornelius Nepos. As it is, he was obliged in the address to Baldwin, to change Cantia, Kent, into Tantia; for which he substitutes Pontia in the margin, as an ingenious conjecture.

<sup>1</sup> Leland, pp. 224, 225. [The MS. of this described by Warton below as having been once in the possession of the Duke of Chandos at Canons, does not seem to have been since recovered.]

<sup>2</sup> The manuscript at Magdalen College, mentioned by Leland, is entitled, *Dares Phrygius de bello Trojano*. Lel. p. 236. As also MSS. Digb. *supr. citat.* But see Sect. iii. *infr.*

<sup>3</sup> Statius is cited in the epistles of Stephen of Tournay, a writer of the twelfth century. "Divinam ejus responcionem, ut *Thebais Aeneida, longe sequor, et vestigia semper adoro." He died in 1200. Epistole, 1611. Epist. v. p. 535. On account of the variety of his matter and the facility of his manner, none of the antient poets are more frequently cited in the writers of the dark ages than Ovid. His *Fafsi* seems to have been their favourite: a work thus admirably characterised by an ingenious French writer. "Les Fafses d'Ovide renferment plus d'erudition qu'aucun autre ouvrage de l'antiquité. C'est le chef d'œuvre de ce poete, et une espece de devotion païenne." Vigneul Marville [Bonaventure d'Argonne], *Misc. Hist. et Lit.* tom. ii. p. 306. [The compiler of the very common and well-known treatise,] *De Mirabilibus Rome*, published by Montfaucon, calls this work *Martyrologium Ovidii de Fafsis*, Montf. *Diar. Italic.* c. xx. p. 293.*

<sup>4</sup> Voltaire has expressed his admiration of the happy choice of subject which Tasso made. We here see a poet of an age much earlier than Tasso celebrating the same sort of expedition.

<sup>5</sup> Lib. i. 47.

imagination and expression; and our poet's classical ideas seem here to have been tinged with the description of some magnificent oriental palace, which he had seen in the romances of his age.

Regia conspicuis moles inscripta figuris  
Exceptura ducem, senis affulta columnis,  
Tollitur: electro vernal basis, arduus auro  
Ardet apex, radioque fylus candescit eburno.  
Gemmæ quas littoris Indi  
Dives arena tegit, aurum quod parturit Hermus,  
In varias vivunt species, ditique decorum  
Materie contendit opus: quod nobile ductor  
Quod clarum gesit, ars explicat, ardua pandit  
Moles, et totum referat sculptura tyrannum.<sup>1</sup>

He thus describes Penthesilea and Pyrrhus:

Eminet, horrificas rapiens post terga secures,  
Virginei regina chori: non provida cultus  
Cura trahit, non forma juvat, frons aspera, vestis  
Discolor, insertumque armis irascitur aurum.  
Si visum, si verba notes, si lumina pendas,  
Nil leve, nil fractum: latet omni foemina facto.  
Obvius ultrices accendit in arma cohortes,  
Myrmidonasque suos, curru praevectus anhelo,  
Pyrrhus, &c.

Meritosque offensus in hostes  
Arma patris, nunc ulti, habet: sed tanta recusant  
Pondera crescentes humeri, majoraque casis  
Colla petit, breviorque manus vix colligit hastam.<sup>2</sup>

Afterwards a Grecian leader, whose character is ineffective, insults Penthesilea and her troop of heroines with these reproaches,

Tunc sic increpitans, Pudeat, Mari inclyte, dixit:  
En! tua signa gerit, quin nostra effemina arma  
Staminibus vix apta manus. Nunc stabitis hercle  
Perjuræ turres, calathos et pensa pueræ  
Plena rotant, sparguntque colos. Hoc milite Troja,  
His fidit telis. At non patiemur Achivi:  
Etsi turpe viris timidas calcare pueras,  
Ibo tamen contra. Sic ille: At virgo loquacem  
Tarda sequi sexum, velox ad prælia, solo  
Respondet jaculo,<sup>3</sup> &c.

I will add one of his comparisons. The poet is speaking of the reluctant advances of the Trojans under their new leader Memnon, after the fall of Hector:

Qualiter Hyblæi mellita pericula reges,  
Si signis iniere datis, labente tyranno  
Alterutro, viduos dant agmina stridula questus;  
Et, subitum vix nausta ducem, metuentia vibrant  
Spicula, et imbelli remeant in prælia rostro.<sup>4</sup>

His *Antiocheis* was written in the same strain, and had equal merit. All that remains of it is the following fragment,<sup>5</sup> in which the poet celebrates the heroes of Britain, and particularly King Arthur:

<sup>1</sup> Lib. iv. 451.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. vi. p. 589.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. vi. 609.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. vi. 19.

<sup>5</sup> Camd. [Remains, edit. 1870, p. 338-9.] See also Camd. Brit. Leland having learned from the *Bellum Trojanum* that Josephus had likewise written a poem on

## Inclita fulsit

Posteritas ducibus tantis, tot dives alumnis,  
 Tot foecunda viris, premerent qui viribus orbem  
 Et fama veteres. Hinc Constantinus adeptus  
 Imperium, Romam tenuit, Byzantium auxit.  
 Hinc Senonum duxor captiva Brennius urbe<sup>1</sup>  
 Romuleas domuit flammis vietricibus arces.  
 Hinc et Scæva fatus, pars non obscura tumultus  
 Civilis, Magnum solus qui mole soluta  
 Obsedit, meliorque stetit pro Cæfare murus.  
 Hinc, celebri fato, felici floruit ortu,  
 Flos regum Arthurus,<sup>2</sup> cuius tamen acta stupori  
 Non micuere minus: totus quod in aure voluptas,  
 Et populo plaudente favor.<sup>3</sup> Quæcunque<sup>4</sup> priorum  
 Infipice: Pellæum commendat fama tyrannum,  
 Pagina Cæsareos loquitur Romana triumphos;  
 Alciden domitis attollit gloria monstros;  
 Sed nec pinetum coryli, nec sydera solem  
 Æquunt. Annales Graios Latiosque revolve,  
 Præsca parem nescit, æqualem postera nullum  
 Exhibitura dies. Reges supereminet omnes:  
 Solus præteritis melior, majorque futuris.

Camden asserts, that Joseph accompanied King Richard I. to the holy land,<sup>5</sup> and was an eye-witness of that heroic monarch's exploits among the Saracens, which afterwards he celebrated in the *Antiocheis*. Leland mentions his love-verses and epigrams, which are long since perished.<sup>6</sup> He<sup>7</sup> flourished in the year 1210.<sup>8</sup>

There seems to have been a rival spirit of writing Latin heroic poems about this period. In France, Guillaume le Breton, or William of Bretagny, about the year 1230, wrote a Latin heroic poem on Philip Augustus King of France about the commencement of the thirteenth century, in twelve books, entitled *Philippis*.<sup>9</sup> Barthius

the Crusade, searched for it in many places, but without success. At length he found a piece of it in the library of Abingdon Abbey in Berkshire. "Cum executerem pulverem et tineas Abbandunensis bibliothecæ," *ut supr.* Here he discovered that Josephus was a native of Exeter, which city was highly celebrated in that fragment.

<sup>1</sup> f. "Captiva Brennus in."

<sup>2</sup> From this circumstance, Pits absurdly recites the title of this poem thus, *Antiocheis in Regem Arthurum*, Jos. Isc.

<sup>3</sup> The text seems to be corrupt in this sentence. Or perhaps somewhat is wanting. I have changed favus, which is in Camden, into favour.

<sup>4</sup> f. quemcunque.

<sup>5</sup> Rem. *ut supr.* p. [339.]

<sup>6</sup> Leland, *ut supr.* p. 239. Our biographers mention *Panegyricum in Henricum*. But the notion of this poem seems to have taken rise from the verses on Henry II., quoted by Leland from the *Bellum Trojanum*. He is likewise said to have written in Latin verse *De Institutione Cyri*.

<sup>7</sup> Italy had at that time produced no writer comparable to Iscanus.

<sup>8</sup> Bale, iii. 60. Compare *Dresenius ad Lectorem*. Prefixed to the *De Bello Trojano*. Francof. 1620. Mr. Wise, the late Radcliffe librarian, told me that a manuscript of the *Antiocheis* was in the library of the Duke of Chandos at Canons.

<sup>9</sup> He wrote it at fifty-five years of age. *Philipp.* lib. iii. v. 381. It was first printed in Pithou's *Eleven Historians of France*, 1536. Next in Du Chesne, *Script. Franc.* tom. v. p. 93, 1694. But the best edition is with Barthius's notes, 1657. Brito says in the *Philippis*, that he wrote a poem called *Karlottis*, in praise of Petri

gives a prodigious character of this poem, and affirms that the author, a few gallicisms excepted, has expressed the facility of Ovid with singular happiness.<sup>1</sup> The versification much resembles that of Josephus Iscanus. He appears to have drawn a great part of his materials from Roger Hoveden's annals. But I am of opinion, that the *Philippis* is greatly exceeded by the *Alexandreis* of Philip Gaultier de Chatillon, who flourished likewise in France, and was provost of the canons of Tournay, about the year 1200.<sup>2</sup> This poem celebrates the actions of Alexander the Great, is founded on Quintus Curtius,<sup>3</sup> consists of ten books, and is dedicated to Guillerm, archbishop of Rheims. To give the reader an opportunity of comparing Gaultier's style and manner with those of our countryman Josephus, I will transcribe a few specimens from a beautiful and ancient manuscript of the *Alexandreis* in the Bodleian library.<sup>4</sup> This is the exordium:

Gesta ducis Macedum totum digesta per orbem,  
Quam large dispersit opes, quo milite Porum  
Vicit aut Darium; quo principe Græcia viatrix  
Risit, et a Persis redire tributa Corinthum,  
Musæ, refer.<sup>5</sup>

A beautiful rural scene is thus described:

Patulis ubi frondea ramis  
Laurus odoriferas celabat crinibus herbas :  
Sepe sub hac memorant carmen sylvestre canentes  
Nympharum vidisse choros, Satyrosque procaces.  
Fons cadit a læva, quem cespite gramen obumbrat  
Purpureo, verisque latens sub vele jocatur,  
Rivulus et lento rigat inferiora meatu,  
Garrulus, et frepitu facit obsurdescere montes.  
Hic mater Cybele Zephyrum tibi, Flora, maritans,  
Pullulat, et vallem fecundat gratia fontis.  
Qualiter Alpinis spumoso vortice saxis  
Descendit Rhodanus, ubi Maximianus Eos  
Extinxit cuneos, cum sanguinis unda meatum  
Fluminis adjuvit.<sup>6</sup>

He excels in similes. Alexander, when a stripling, is thus compared to a young lion:

Qualiter Hyrcanis cum forte leunculis arvis  
Cornibus elatos videt ire ad pabula cervos,  
Cui nondum totos descendit robur in artus,  
Nec bene firmus adhuc, nec dentibus asper aduncis,  
Palpitat, et vacuum ferit improba lingua palatum ;  
Effunditque prius animis quam dente cruentem.<sup>7</sup>

The *Alexandreis* soon became so popular that Henry of Gaunt, archdeacon of Tournay, about the year 1330, complains that this

*Carlotti sui*, then not fifteen years old. *Philipp.* lib. i. v. 10. This poem was never printed, and is hardly known.

<sup>1</sup> In Not. p. 7. See also *Adversar.* xlivi. 7. He prefers it to the *Alexandreis* mentioned below, in Not. p. 528. See *Memb. Lit.* viii. 536.

<sup>2</sup> It was first printed, Argent. 1513, 8vo. And two or three times since.

<sup>3</sup> See *infr.* sect. iii. And Barth. *Advers.* lli. 16.

<sup>4</sup> MSS. Digb. 52, 4to.

<sup>5</sup> fol. 1, a.

<sup>6</sup> fol. 1, a.

<sup>7</sup> fol. xxi. a.

poem was commonly taught in the rhetorical schools, instead of Lucan<sup>1</sup> and Virgil.<sup>2</sup> The learned Charpentier cites a passage from the manuscript statutes of the University of Thoulouse, dated 1328, in which the professors of grammar are directed to read to their pupils *De Historiis Alexandri*.<sup>3</sup> Among which I include Gaultier's poem.<sup>4</sup> It is quoted as a familiar classic by Thomas Rodburn, a monkish chronicler, who wrote about the year 1420;<sup>5</sup> [but it is a curious illustration of the perishable character of all human renown that all that is generally known of this once celebrated production consists in the well-worn line beginning: "Incidis in Scyllam," and of this the origin and authorship were long undiscovered, owing to the obscurity of the poem of which it formed part.<sup>6</sup>] An anonymous Latin poet, seemingly of the thirteenth century, who has left a poem on the life and miracles of Saint Oswald, mentions Homer, Gaultier, and Lucan, as the three capital heroic poets. Homer, he says, has celebrated Hercules, Gaultier the son of Philip, and Lucan has sung the praises of Cæsar. But, adds he, these heroes much less deserve to be immortalised in verse, than the deeds of the holy confessor Oswald:

In nova fert animus antiquas vertere prosas  
Carmina, &c.  
Alciden hyperbolice commendat Homerus,  
Gualterus pingit torvo Philippida vultu,  
Cæsareas late laudes Lucanus adauget:  
Tres illi famam meruerunt, tresque poetas

<sup>1</sup> Here, among many other proofs which might be given, and which will occur hereafter, is a proof of the estimation in which Lucan was held during the middle ages. He is quoted by Geoffrey of Monmouth and John of Salisbury, writers of the eleventh century. *Hist. Brit.* iv. 9, and *Politicat.* p. 215, edit. 1515, &c. &c. There is an anonymous Italian translation of Lucan, as early as the year 1310. The Italians have also [*Liber Lucani editus in vulgari sermone metrico*, per Cardinalem de Montechiello, printed at Rome in 1492 and at Milan in the same year.] It is in the octave rime, and in ten books. But the translator [Luca Manzili] has so much departed from the original, as to form a sort of romance of his own. [In 1541, a translation into the Castilian language appeared at Lisbon under the title of *La historia, que escrivio en latin el poeta Lucano, traçadada en castellano* por Mart. Laffo de Oropeña. It was reprinted at Antwerp in 1585, and at Burgos in 1588.] Lucan was first printed in the year 1469. And before the year 1500, there were six other editions of this classic, whose declamatory manner rendered him very popular. He was published at Paris in French in 1500. [Brunet, *Manuel*, dern. edit. iii. 1201.]

<sup>2</sup> See Hen. Gandav. *Monasticon*. c. 20, and Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* ii. 218. Alanus de Insulis, who died in 1202, in his poem called *Anti-claudianus*, a Latin poem of nine books, much in the manner of Claudian, and written in defence of divine providence against a passage in that poet's *Rufinus*, thus attacks the rising reputation of the *Alexandreis*:

"Mævius in coelis ardens os ponere mutum,  
Gesta Ducus Macedum, tenebrofi carminis umbra,  
Dicere dum tentat."

<sup>3</sup> *Suppl. Du Cang. Lat. Gloss.* tom. ii. p. 1255. V. *Metrificatura*. By which barbarous word they signified the art of poetry, or rather the art of writing Latin verses.

<sup>4</sup> See sect. iii. *infr.*

<sup>5</sup> *Hist. Maj. Winton.* apud Wharton, *Angl. Sacr.* i. 242.

<sup>6</sup> [See *Engl. Prov. and Proverb. Phrases*, 1869, p. 236.]

Auctores habuere suos, multo magis autem  
Oswaldi regis debent insignia dici.<sup>1</sup>

I do not cite this writer as a proof of the elegant versification which had now become fashionable, but to show the popularity of the *Alexandreis*, at least among scholars. About the year 1206, Gunther a German, and a Cistercian monk of the diocese of Bâle, wrote an heroic poem in Latin verse, entitled *Ligurinus*, which is scarce[ly] inferior to the *Philippis* of Guillaume le Breton or the *Alexandreis* of Gualtier: but not so polished and classical as the *Trojan War* of our Josephus Iscanus. It is in ten books and the subject is the war of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa against the Milanese in Liguria.<sup>2</sup> He had before written a Latin poem on the expedition of the Emperor Conrad against the Saracens, and the recovery of the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem by Godfrey of Boulogne, which he called *Solymarium*.<sup>3</sup> The subject is much like that of the *Antiocheis*; but which of the two pieces was written first it is difficult to ascertain.

<sup>1</sup> I will add some of the exordial lines almost immediately following, as they contain names and other circumstances, which perhaps may lead to point out the age if not the name of the author. They were never before printed :

“ Tu quoque digneris, precor, aspirare labori,  
Flos cleri, Martine, meo; qui talis es inter  
Abbatess, qualis est patronus tuus inter  
Pontifices: hic est primas, tu primus eorum, &c.  
Hic per Aidanum sua munificentia munus  
Illi promeruit, &c.  
Tuque benigne Prior, primas, et prime Priorum,  
Qui cleri, Rogere, rofam geris, annue vati, &c.  
Tuque Sacrifa, sacris infans, qui jure vocaris  
Symon, id est humilis, quo nemo benignior alter  
Abbatis præcepta sui velocius audit,  
Tardius obloquitur: qui tot mea carmina servas  
Scripta volumibus, nec plura requirere cessas.  
Præteritos laudas, præsentes dilige versus,” &c.

The manuscript is Bibl. Bodl. A. 1, 2, B. (Langb. 5, p. 6.) This piece begins at f. 57. Other pieces precede, in Latin poetry : as *Vita Sanctorum*, T. Becket. f. 3 :

“ Qui moritur? Præful. Cur? pro Grege,” &c.

Prol. pr. f. 23 :

“ Detineant alios Parnassi culmina Cyrrhae  
Plausus, Pieridum vox, Heliconis opes.”

De partu Virginis, f. 28, b :

“ Nectareum rorem terris,” &c.

S. Birinus, f. 42 :

“ Et pudet, et fateor,” &c.

<sup>2</sup> First printed 1507, and frequently since.

<sup>3</sup> He mentions it in his *Ligurium*, lib. i. v. 13, *seq.* v. 648, *seq.* See also Voſa. *Poet. Lat.* c. vi. p. 73. It was never printed. Gunther wrote a prose history of the sack at Constantinople by Baldwin: the materials were taken from the mouth of Abbot Martin, who was present at the siege, in 1204. It was printed by Canisius, *Antiqu. Lett.* tom. iv. p. ii. p. 358. Ingolstadt, 1604, 4to. Again, in a new edition of that compilation, 1725, tom. iv. See also Pagi, ad A. D. 1519, n. xiv.

While this spirit of classical Latin poetry was universally prevailing, our countryman Geoffrey de Vinesauf, an accomplished scholar, and educated not only in the priory of Saint Frideswide at Oxford, but in the Universities of France and Italy, published while at Rome a critical didactic poem entitled *De Nova Poetria*.<sup>1</sup> This book is dedicated to Pope Innocent III.: and its intention was to recommend and illustrate the new and legitimate mode of versification which had lately begun to flourish in Europe, in opposition to the Leonine or barbarous species. This he compendiously styles, and by way of distinction, *The New Poetry*. We must not be surprised to find Horace's *Art of Poetry* entitled *Horatii Nova Poetria*, so late as the year 1389, in a catalogue of the library of a monastery at Dover.<sup>2</sup>

Even a knowledge of the Greek language imported from France, but chiefly from Italy, was now beginning to be diffused in England. I am inclined to think that many Greek manuscripts found their way into Europe from Constantinople in the time of the Crusades: and we might observe that the Italians, who seem to have been the most polished and intelligent people of Europe during the barbarous ages, carried on communications with the Greek empire as early as the reign of Charlemagne. Robert Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, an universal scholar, and no less conversant in polite letters than the most abstruse sciences, cultivated and patronised the study of the Greek language. This illustrious prelate, who is said to have composed almost two hundred books, read lectures in the school of the Franciscan Friars at Oxford about the year 1230.<sup>3</sup> He translated Dionysius the Areopagite and Damascenus into Latin.<sup>4</sup> He greatly facilitated the knowledge of Greek by a translation of Suidas's *Lexicon*, a book in high repute among the lower Greeks, and at that time almost a recent compilation.<sup>5</sup> He promoted John of Basingstoke to the archdeaconry of Leicester; chiefly because he was a Greek scholar, and possessed many Greek manuscripts, which he is said to have brought from Athens into England.<sup>6</sup> He entertained, as a do-

<sup>1</sup> It has been often printed. I think it is called in some manuscripts, “ *De Arte distandi, verificandi, et transferendi.* ” See Selden, *Prefat. Dec. Scriptor.* p. xxxix. And Selden, *Op. ii.* 168. He is himself no contemptible Latin poet, and is celebrated by Chaucer. See Urry's edit. pp. 468, 560. He seems to have lived about 1200.

<sup>2</sup> Ex *Matricula Monach. Monast. Dover. apud MSS. Br. Twyne, notat. 8, p. 758, archiv. Oxon.* Yet all Horace's writings were often transcribed, and not unfamiliar, in the dark ages. His odes are quoted by Fitz-Stephen in his *Description of London*, [printed in an English dress in the *Antiq. Repert.* 1807, vol. i. p. 241; but I find no mention of Horace]. Rhabanus Maurus above mentioned quotes two verses from the *Art of Poetry*. *Op. tom. ii. p. 46, edit. 1627.*

<sup>3</sup> Kennet, *Paroch. Antiq.* p. 217.

<sup>4</sup> Leland, *Script. Brit.* p. 283.

<sup>5</sup> Boston of Bury says, that he translated the book called *Suda*. *Catal. Script. Eccles. Robert. Lincoln.* Boston lived in the year 1410. Such was their ignorance at this time even of the name of this lexicographer.

<sup>6</sup> Lel. *Script. Brit.* p. 266. Matthew Paris asserts that he introduced into England a knowledge of the Greek numeral letters. That historian adds, “ *De quibus figuris hoc maxime admirandum, quod unica figura quilibet numerus representatur:* ”

mestic in his palace, Nicholas, chaplain of the abbot of Saint Albans, surnamed Græcus from his uncommon proficiency in Greek; and by his assistance he translated from Greek into Latin the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.<sup>1</sup> Grosseteste had almost incurred the censure of excommunication from preferring a complaint to the Pope, that most of the opulent benefices in England were occupied by Italians.<sup>2</sup> But this practice, although notoriously founded on the monopolising and arbitrary spirit of papal imposition, and a manifest act of injustice to the English clergy, probably contributed to introduce many learned foreigners into England, and to propagate philosophical literature.

Bishop Grosseteste is also said to have been profoundly skilled in the Hebrew language;<sup>3</sup> [but it appears necessary, in forming an estimate of mediæval scholarship or erudition, to guard ourselves against the danger of supposing that the same standard of judging prevailed then as prevails at present. There is, probably, scarcely a monitor of respectable abilities in any of our public schools who is

quod non est in Latino vel in Algorismo." *Hist. edit.* 1684, p. 721. He translated from Greek into Latin a grammar which he called *Donatus Græcorum*. See Pegge's *Life of Roger de Weseham*, pp. 46, 47, 51. And *infra*. He seems to have flourished about the year 1230. Bacon also wrote a Greek grammar, in which is the following curious passage: "Episcopus consecrans ecclesiam, scribat Alphabetum Graecum in pulvere cum cuiuslibe baculi pastorali: sed omnes episcopi qui Graecum ignorant, scribant tres notas numerorum quæ non sunt literæ," &c. *Gr. Gram.* cap. ult. p. iii. *apud MSS. Br. Twyne, 8vo. p. 649, archiv. Oxon.* [This is not in the *Opera Quædam Inedita*, 1859.] See what is said of the new translations of Aristotle, from the original Greek into Latin, about the twelfth century. *Sect. ix. vol. ii. infra.* I believe the translators understood very little Greek. Our countryman Michael Scotus was one of the first of them; who was assisted by Andrew a Jew. Michael was astrologer to Frederick, emperor of Germany, and appears to have executed his translations at Toledo in Spain, about the year 1220. These new versions were perhaps little more than corrections from those of the early Arabians, made under the inspection of the learned Spanish Saracens. To the want of a true knowledge of the original language of the ancient Greek philosophers Roger Bacon attributes the slow and imperfect advances of real science at this period. On this account their improvements were very inconsiderable, notwithstanding the appearance of erudition, and the fervour with which almost every branch of philosophy had been now studied in various countries for near half a century. See Wood, *Hist. Antiq. Univ. Oxon.* i. 120, seq. Dempster, xii. 940. Bacon, *Op. Maj.* per Jebb, i. 15, ii. 8. Tanner, *Bibl.* p. 526. And MSS. Cotton. C. 5, fol. 138. A learned writer affirms, that Aristotle's books in the original Greek were brought out of the East into Europe about the year 1200. He is also of opinion, that during the crusades many Europeans, from their commerce with the Syrian Palestines, got a knowledge of Arabic: and that importing into Europe Arabic versions of some parts of Aristotle's works, which they found in the East, they turned them into Latin. These were chiefly his Ethics and Politics. And these new translators he further supposes were employed at their return into Europe in revising the old translations of other parts of Aristotle, made from Arabic into Latin. Renaudot, *De Barbar. Aristot. Versionib. apud Fabric. Bibl. Gr.* xii. p. 248. See also Murator. *Antiq. Ital. Med. Æv.* iii. 936.

<sup>1</sup> See MSS. Reg. Brit. Mus. 4 D. vii. 4. Wood, *Hist. Ant. Univ. Oxon.* i. 82. And M. Paris, *sub anno* 1242.

<sup>2</sup> Godwin, *Episc.* p. 348, edit. 1616.

<sup>3</sup> He is mentioned again, *seft. ii. infra.*

not as “profoundly skilled” in Hebrew as Bishop Grosseteste; and when it is considered that the state of knowledge as regards the Hebrew language was not only in the seventeenth century very far from being advanced in England, but in our age is still extremely circumscribed even among linguists, it will become evident that the expression used is to be received only in a relative sense.]

William the Conqueror permitted great numbers of Jews to come over from Rouen, and to settle in England about the year 1087.<sup>1</sup> Their multitude soon increased, and they spread themselves in vast bodies throughout most of the cities and capital towns in England, where they built synagogues. There were fifteen hundred at York about the year 1189.<sup>2</sup> At Bury in Suffolk is a very complete remain of a Jewish synagogue of stone in the Norman style, large and magnificent. Hence it was that many of the learned English ecclesiastics of these times became acquainted with their books and language. In the reign of William Rufus, at Oxford, the Jews were remarkably numerous, and had acquired considerable property; and some of their rabbis were permitted to open a school in the university, where they instructed not only their own people, but many Christian students, in the Hebrew literature, about the year 1054.<sup>3</sup> Within two hundred years after their admission or establishment by the Conqueror, they were banished the kingdom.<sup>4</sup> This circumstance was highly favourable to the circulation of their learning in England. The suddenness of their dismission obliged them for present subsistence, and other reasons, to sell their moveable goods of all kinds, among which were large quantities of rabbinical books. The monks in various parts availed themselves of the distribution of these treasures. At Huntingdon and Stamford there was a prodigious sale of their effects, containing immense stores of Hebrew manuscripts, which were immediately purchased by Gregory of Huntingdon, prior of the Abbey of Ramsey. Gregory speedily became an adept in the Hebrew, by means of these valuable acquisitions, which he bequeathed to his monastery about the year 1250.<sup>5</sup> Other members of the same convent, in consequence of these advantages, are said to have been equal proficients in the same language, soon after the death of Prior Gregory: among which were Robert Dodford, librarian of Ramsey, and Laurence Holbech, who compiled a Hebrew Lexicon.<sup>6</sup> At Oxford, great multitudes of their

<sup>1</sup> Hollinsh. *Chron.* sub ann. p. 15 a.

<sup>2</sup> Anders. *Comm.* i. 93.

<sup>3</sup> *Angl. Judaic.* p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Hollinsh. *ibid.* sub ann. 1289, p. 285 a. Matthew of Westminster says that 16,511 were banished.—*Flor. Hist.* ad an. 1290. Great numbers of Hebrew rolls and charts, relating to their estates in England, and escheated to the king, are now remaining among the [public] records.

<sup>5</sup> Leland, *Script. Brit.* p. 321. And MSS. Bibl. Lambeth. Wharton, L. p. 661. “*Libri Prioris Gregorii de Ramesey. Prima pars Bibliothecæ Hebraicæ,*” &c.

<sup>6</sup> Bale, iv. 41, ix. 9. Lel. *ubi supr.* p. 452.

books fell into the hands of Roger Bacon, or were bought by his brethren the Franciscan friars of that university.<sup>1</sup>

But, to return to the leading point of our enquiry, this promising dawn of polite letters and rational knowledge was soon obscured. The temporary gleam of light did not arrive to perfect day. The minds of scholars were diverted from these liberal studies in the rapidity of their career; and the arts of composition and the ornaments of language were neglected, to make way for the barbarous and barren subtleties of scholastic divinity. The first teachers of this art, originally founded on that spirit of intricate and metaphysical enquiry which the Arabians had communicated to philosophy, and which now became almost absolutely necessary for defending the doctrines of Rome, were Peter Lombard, archbishop of Paris, and the celebrated Abelard: men whose consummate abilities were rather qualified to reform the church, and to restore useful science, than to corrupt both, by confounding the common sense of mankind with frivolous speculation.<sup>2</sup> These visionary theologists never explained or illustrated any scriptural topic: on the contrary, they perverted the simplest expressions of the sacred text, and embarrassed the most evident truths of the Gospel by laboured distinctions and unintelligible solutions. From the universities of France, which were then filled with multitudes of English students, this admired species of sophistry was adopted in England, and encouraged by Lanfranc and Anselm, archbishops of Canterbury.<sup>3</sup> And so successful was its progress at Oxford, that before the reign of Edward II. no foreign university could boast so conspicuous a catalogue of subtle and invincible doctors.

Nor was the profession of the civil and canonical laws a small impediment to the propagation of those letters which humanize the mind, and cultivate the manners. I do not mean to deny, that the accidental discovery of the imperial code in the twelfth century contributed in a considerable degree to civilize Europe, by introducing, among other beneficial consequences, more legitimate ideas concerning the nature of government and the administration of justice, by creating a necessity of transferring judicial decrees from an illiterate nobility to the cognizance of scholars, by lessening the attachment to the military profession, and by giving honour and importance to civil employments: but to suggest that the mode in which this invaluable system of jurisprudence was studied, proved injurious to polite literature. It was no sooner revived than it was received as a scholastic science, and taught by regular professors, in most of the universities of Europe. To be skilled in the theology of the schools was the chief and general ambition of scholars: but at

<sup>1</sup> Wood, *Hist. Antiq. Univ. Oxon.* i. 77, 132. See also sect. ix. *infra.*

<sup>2</sup> They both flourished about the year 1150.

<sup>3</sup> "Baccalaureus qui legit textum (sc. S. Scripture) succumbit lectori Sententiarum Parisiis," &c.—Rog. Bacon, *apud A. Wood, Hist. Antiq. Univ. Oxon.* i. p. 53. Lombardus was the author of the *Sententiae*, [a very common MS.]

the same time a knowledge of both the laws was become an indispensable requisite, at least an essential recommendation, for obtaining the most opulent ecclesiastical dignities. Hence it was cultivated with universal avidity. It became so considerable a branch of study in the plan of academical discipline, that twenty scholars out of seventy were destined to the study of the civil and canon laws, in one of the most ample colleges at Oxford, founded in the year 1385. And it is easy to conceive the pedantry with which it was pursued in these seminaries during the middle ages. It was treated with the same spirit of idle speculation which had been carried into philosophy and theology, it was overwhelmed with endless commentaries which disclaimed all elegance of language, and served only to exercise genius, as it afforded materials for framing the flimsy labyrinths of casuistry.

It was not, indeed, probable that these attempts in elegant literature which I have mentioned should have any permanent effects. The change, like a sudden revolution in government, was too rapid for duration. It was, moreover, premature, and on that account not likely to be lasting. The habits of superstition and ignorance were as yet too powerful for a reformation of this kind to be effected by a few polite scholars. It was necessary that many circumstances and events, yet in the womb of time, should take place, before the minds of men could be so far enlightened as to receive these improvements.

But perhaps inventive poetry lost nothing by this relapse. Had classical taste and judgment been now established, imagination would have suffered, and too early a check would have been given to the beautiful extravagancies of romantic fabling. In a word, truth and reason would have chased before their time those spectres of illusive fancy, so pleasing to the imagination, which delight to hover in the gloom of ignorance and superstition, and which form so considerable a part of the poetry of the succeeding centuries.

## IV.

On the *Gesta Romanorum*.

ALES are the learning of a rude age. In the progress of letters, speculation and inquiry commence with refinement of manners. Literature becomes sentimental and discursive, in proportion as a people is polished: and men must be instructed by facts, either real or imaginary, before they can apprehend the subtleties of argument and the force of reflection.

Vincent of Beauvais, a learned Dominican of France, who flourished in the thirteenth century, observes in his *Mirror of History*, that it was a practice of the preachers of his age to rouse the indifference and relieve the languor of their hearers, by quoting the fables of *Æsop*: yet, at the same time, he recommends a sparing and prudent application of those profane fancies in the discussion of sacred subjects.<sup>1</sup> Among the Harleian manuscripts in the British Museum we find a very ancient collection of two hundred and fifteen stories, romantic, allegorical, religious, and legendary, which were evidently compiled by a professed preacher for the use of monastic societies. Some of these appear to have been committed to writing from the recital of bards and minstrels: others to have been invented and written by troubadours and monks.<sup>2</sup> In the year 1389, a grand system of divinity appeared at Paris, afterwards [*circā 1481*] translated by [Lydgate] under the title of the *Court of Sapience*, which abounds with a multitude of historical examples, parables, and apollogues; and which the writer wisely supposes to be much more likely to interest the attention and excite the devotion of the people than the authority of science and the parade of theology. In consequence of the expediency of this mode of instruction, the Legends of the Saints were received into the ritual, and rehearsed in the course of public worship. For religious romances were nearly allied to songs of chivalry; and the same gross ignorance of the people, which in the early centuries of Christianity created a necessity of introducing the visible pomp of theatrical ceremonies into the

<sup>1</sup> *Specul. Hist.* lib. iv. c. viii. fol. 31, b. edit. 1591. [The old preachers, from the twelfth to the fifteenth century, in general made great use in their sermons of stories and fables, and hence it was a common practice to make collections of such stories, so as to have them ready at hand for use. The Harleian manuscript mentioned by Warton is one of this collection. They are not uncommon among collections of mediæval manuscripts. Mr. Wright has published a selection of tales from such sources in his Latin Tales and Stories printed for the Percy Society.]

<sup>2</sup> MSS. Harl. 463, membran. fol.

churches, was taught the duties of devotion, by being amused with the achievements of spiritual knight-errantry, and impressed with the examples of pious heroism. In more cultivated periods, the *Decameron* of Boccaccio and other books of that kind ought to be considered as the remnant of a species of writing which was founded on the simplicity of mankind, and was adapted to the exigencies of the infancy of society.<sup>1</sup>

Many obsolete collections of this sort still remain, both printed and manuscript, containing narratives either fictitious or historical :

Of king and heroes old,  
Such as the wise Demodocus once told  
In solemn songs at King Alcinous' feast.<sup>2</sup>

But among the ancient story-books of this character, a Latin compilation entitled *Gesta Romanorum* seems to have been the favourite.

This piece has been before incidentally noticed : but as it operated powerfully on the general body of our old poetry, affording a variety of inventions not only to Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate, but to their distant successors, I have judged it of sufficient importance to be examined at large in a separate dissertation : which has been designedly reserved for this place<sup>3</sup> for the purpose of recapitulation and illustration, and of giving the reader a more commodious opportunity of surveying at leisure, from this intermediate point of view and under one comprehensive detail, a connected display of the materials and original subjects of many of our past and future poets.

Indeed, in the times with which we are now about to be concerned, [the *Gesta Romanorum*] seems to have been growing into more esteem. [About 1520,] Wynkyn de Worde published the book in English ; [and in 1577, Richard Robinson, citizen of London, founded upon that version a new one, better adapted to the prevailing taste of the age ;]<sup>4</sup> and of this modernised version there were six impressions before the year 1601. There is an edition in black letter so late as the year 1689. [In] the year 1596, an English version [by Anthony Munday] appeared of *Epitomes des cent Histoires Tragiques, partie extraictes des Actes des Romains et autres*, &c., [under the title of the *Orator*. Of this work a notice occurs hereafter.] From the popularity, or rather familiarity, of this work in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the title of *Gesta Grayorum* was affixed to the history of

<sup>1</sup> [The *Decameron*, I imagine, belongs to a different class of literature which we do seem to have derived from the Arabs, and of which the best known example is the *Arabian Nights Entertainment*.—Wright.]

<sup>2</sup> Milton. *At a Vacation Exercise, &c.*

<sup>3</sup> [This Dissertation on the *Gesta Romanorum* was placed by the author at the beginning of his third volume, which was published seven years after the first : it has now been thought best to let it follow the other Dissertations.—Price. In sect. xix. Warton has introduced over again, nearly *verbatim*, much that is found here told at quite sufficient length. This, perhaps inadvertent, repetition has now been cancelled.]

<sup>4</sup> [This book passed through an extraordinary series of editions between 1577 and 1689.]

the acts of the Christmas Prince at Gray's-Inn, in 1594. In *Sir Giles Gooscap*, an anonymous comedy, presented by the Children of the Chapel in the year 1606, we have, "Then for your lordships quips and quick jests, why *Gesta Romanorum* were nothing to them." And in George Chapman's *May-day*, a comedy, printed in 1611, a man of the highest literary taste for the pieces in vogue is characterized, "One that has read *Marcus Aurelius, Gesta Romanorum, The Mirrour of Magistrates*, &c.—to be led by the nose like a blind beare that has read nothing!"<sup>1</sup> The critics and collectors in black-letter, I believe, could produce many other proofs.

The *Gesta Romanorum* were first printed without date, but as it is supposed before or about the year 1473.<sup>2</sup> This edition has one hundred and fifty-two chapters, or *gesfa*, and one hundred and [eighteen] leaves.<sup>3</sup> It is in the Gothic letter, and in two columns. The first chapter is of King Pompey, and the last of Prince or King, Cleonicus. The initials are written in red and blue ink. This edition, slightly mutilated, is among Bishop Tanner's printed books in the Bodleian library.<sup>4</sup> [The second edition is, in all probability, that

<sup>1</sup> Act iii. p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> In folio, with this title, *Incipiunt Historie Notabiles collectae ex gestis Romanorum et quibusdam aliis libris cum applicationibus eorumdem*. Much the same title occurs to a manuscript of this work in the Vatican, *Historie Notabiles collectae ex Gestis Romanorum et quibusdam aliis libris cum explicationibus eorumdem*. Montfaucon, *Bibl. Manuscrit.* tom. i. p. 17, No. 172. [But this is merely one of the very numerous copies of the Anglo-Latin *Gesta*, which abounds in libraries here and on the Continent.]

<sup>3</sup> Without initials, paging, signatures, or catch words.

<sup>4</sup> The reverend and learned Dr. Farmer, Master of Emanuel College in Cambridge, [had another] edition, as it seems, printed at Louvain the same or the subsequent year, by John de Westfalia, under the title *Ex gestis Romanorum Historie Notabiles de viciis virtutibusque tractantes cum applicationibus moralisatis et mysticis*. And with this colophon, "Gesta Romanorum cum quibusdam aliis Historiis eisdem annexis ad moralitatem dilucide redacta hic finem habent. Quae, diligenter correctis aliorum viciis, impressit Joannes de Westfalia in alma Universitate Louvaniensi." It has one hundred and eighty-one chapters. The first is of King Pompey, as before. The last is entitled *De Adulterio*. That is, twenty-nine more than are contained in the former edition: the first of the additional chapters being the story of Antiochus, or the substance of the romance of Apollonius of Tyre. The initials are inserted in red ink. It has signatures to K. k. Another followed soon afterwards, in quarto, *Ex Gestis Romanorum Historie notabiles*, Goudz, per Girardum Leeu, 1480. [Another] was printed in folio, and in the year 1488, with this title, *Gesta Romanorum cum Applicationibus moralisatis et mysticis*. The colophon is, "Ex Gestis Romanorum cum pluribus applicatis Historiis de virtutibus et viciis mystice ad intellectum transsumptis Recollectorii finis, Anno nre salutis m.cccc.lxxxvij. kalendas vero februario xvij." A general and an alphabetical table are subjoined. The book, which is printed in two columns, and in the Gothic character, abounding with abbreviations, contains ninety-three leaves. The initials are written or flourished in red and blue, and all the capitals in the body of the text are miniated with a pen. [Mr. Douce enumerates two editions between this and Leeu's; namely, one printed at Hasselt in 1481, and another in 1482 without the name of the place.—*Price*. But it must be pointed out that the bibliography of the printed *Gesta* still demands careful revision, as the question of priority among the numerous impressions without any note of place, printer and date requires to be authoritatively settled.] There were many other later editions.

which contains one hundred and twenty-five leaves, and one hundred and fifty-one chapters, thirty-two long lines to a page. There is no note (as before) of the place of printing. There is a third, or at all events, later impression of one hundred and sixty-nine leaves, thirty-six lines to a page, printed with the types of Ulric Zell about 1475.]

This work is compiled from the obsolete Latin chronicles of the later Roman or rather German story, heightened by romantic inventions from Legends of the Saints, oriental apologetics, and many of the shorter fictitious narratives which came into Europe with the Arabian literature, and were familiar in the ages of ignorance and imagination. The classics are sometimes cited for authorities; but these are of the lower order, such as Valerius Maximus [the favourite author of the mediæval period], Macrobius, Aulus Gellius, Seneca, Pliny, and Boethius. To every tale a Moralisation is subjoined, reducing it into a christian or moral lesson.

Most of the oriental apologetics are taken from the *Clericalis Disciplina*, or a Latin dialogue between an Arabian philosopher and Edric<sup>1</sup> his son,<sup>2</sup> written by Peter Alphonsus, a baptised Jew, at the beginning of the twelfth century, and collected from Arabian fables, apothegms, and examples.<sup>3</sup> Some are also borrowed from an old Latin translation of the *Calilah u Damnah*, [or the *Fables of Bilpay*,] a celebrated set of eastern fables, to which Alphonsus was indebted.

On the whole, this is the collection in which a curious inquirer might expect to find the original of Chaucer's *Cambuscan*:

Or,—if aught else great bards beside  
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,  
Of turneys and of trophies hung,  
Of forests and enchantments drear,  
Where more is meant than meets the ear.<sup>4</sup>

Our author frequently cites *Gesta Romanorum*, the title of his own work. By which I understand no particular book of that name, but the Roman history in general. Thus in the title of the *Saint Albans Chronicle*, “*Titus Livyus de Gestis Romanorum*” is recited. In the year 1544, Lucius Florus was printed at Paris under the same title. In

---

I must add, that the *Gesta Romanorum* were translated into Dutch so early as the year 1484.

<sup>1</sup> Edric was the name of Enoch among the Arabians, to whom they attribute many fabulous compositions. Herbelot, in v. Lydgate's *Chorle and the Bird*, mentioned above, is taken from the *Clericalis Disciplina* of Alphonsus.

<sup>2</sup> MSS. Harl. 3861. And in many other libraries. It occurs in old French verse, MSS. Digb. 86. membran. *Le Romaunz de Peres Aunfour coment il aprif et chaffia son fils belement.* [The best edition of the *Clericalis Disciplina* is that of Berlin, 1827, with an introduction and notes by Schmidt. Another had been previously issued, with a French prose version, and a metrical translation in the same language, by the *Société des Bibliophiles Français*, 1824, 12mo. Sir F. Madden's information.]

<sup>3</sup> See Tyrwhitt's *Chaucer*, vol. iv. p. 325, seq.

<sup>4</sup> Milton's *Il Pensero*.

the British Museum we find *Les Fais de Romains jusques a la fin de l'empire Domician, selon Orose, Justin, Lucan, &c.* A plain historical deduction.<sup>1</sup> The *Romuleon*, an old manuscript history of Rome from the foundation of the city to Constantine the Great, is also called *De Gestis Romanorum*. This manuscript occurs both in Latin and French: and a French copy, among the royal manuscripts, has the title, *Romuleon, ou des fais de Romains*.<sup>2</sup> Among the manuscript books written by Lapus de Castellione, a Florentine civilian, who flourished about the year 1350, there is one, *De Origine urbis Romae et de Gestis Romanorum*. Gower, in the *Confessio Amantis*, often introduces Roman stories with the Latin preamble, *Hic secundum Gestæ*; where he certainly means the Roman History which by degrees had acquired simply the appellation of *Gesta*. Herman Korner, in his *Chronica Novella*, written about the year 1438, refers for his vouchers to Bede, Orosius, Valerius Maximus, Josephus, Eusebius, and the *Chronicon et Gestæ Romanorum*. Most probably, to say no more, by the *Chronicon* he means the later writers of the Roman affairs, such as Isidore and the monkish compilers; and by *Gesta* the ancient Roman history, as related by Livy and the more established Latin historians.

Neither is it possible that this work could have been brought as a proof or authority, by any serious annalist, for the Roman story.

For though it bears the title of *Gesta Romanorum*, yet this title by no means properly corresponds with the contents of the collection which, as has been already hinted, comprehends a multitude of narratives, either not historical or, in another respect, such as are either totally unconnected with the Roman people, or perhaps the most preposterous misrepresentations of their history. To cover this deviation from the promised plan which, by introducing a more ample variety of matter, has contributed to increase the reader's entertainment, our collector has taken care to preface almost every story with the name or reign of a Roman Emperor who, at the same time, is often a monarch that never existed, and who seldom, whether real or supposititious, has any concern with the circumstances of the narrative.

But I hasten to exhibit a compendious analysis<sup>3</sup> of the chapters

<sup>1</sup> MSS. Reg. 20. C i. [Barbier also repeats the blunder of Pauzer and the printed catalogue of the British Museum, (arising from the same cause) of ascribing a French translation of the *Gesta* to Robert Gaguin, when, in fact, his work is a translation of Livy.—Madden.]

<sup>2</sup> MS. 19 E. v.

<sup>3</sup> [“Of the Latin *Gesta*, as it appears in the editions, an analysis has been given by Warton, but far from complete; since he has omitted no less than fifty-three stories, many of which deserve more attention than some in his list. To supply these deficiencies, and to present a perfect view of this work, as it appeared in upwards of thirty editions, between 1480 and 1530, it was at first proposed to annex a brief notice of each chapter to the present introduction; but the translation of the whole by Swan is so common a book, that, on reflection, the design was abandoned.”—Madden. The translation of the Latin *Gesta* was published by Swan, 1824, 2 vols. 8vo.]

which form this very singular compilation: intermixing occasional illustrations arising from the subject, and shortening or lengthening my abridgment of the stories, in proportion as I judge they are likely to interest the reader. Where, for that reason, I have been very concise, I have yet said enough to direct the critical antiquarian to this collection, in case he should find a similar tale occurring in any of our old poets. I have omitted the mention of [certain] chapters, which were beneath notice. Sometimes, where common authors are quoted, I have only mentioned the author's name, without specifying the substance of the quotation. For it was necessary that the reader should be made acquainted with our collector's track of reading, and the books which he used. In the meantime, this review will serve as a full notification of the edition of 1488, which is more comprehensive and complete than some others of later publication, and to which all the rest, as to a general criterion, may be now comparatively referred.

CHAP. i. Of a daughter of King Pompey, whose chamber was guarded by five armed knights and a dog. Being permitted to be present at a public show, she is seduced by a duke, who is afterwards killed by the champion of her father's court. She is reconciled to her father, and betrothed to a nobleman: on which occasion she receives from her father an embroidered robe and a crown of gold, from the champion a gold ring, another from the wise man who pacified the king's anger, another from the king's son, another from her cousin, and from her spouse a seal of gold. All these presents are inscribed with proverbial sentences, suitable to the circumstances of the princess.

The latter part of this story is evidently oriental. The feudal manners, in a book which professes to record the achievements of the Roman people, are remarkable in the introductory circumstances. But of this mixture we shall see many striking instances.

CHAP. [v]. Of a youth taken captive by pirates. The king's daughter falls in love with him; and having procured his escape, accompanies him to his own country, where they are married.

CHAP. vi. An emperor is married to a beautiful young princess. In case of death, they mutually agree not to survive one another. To try the truth of his wife, the emperor, going into a distant country, orders a report of his death to be circulated. In remembrance of her vow, and in imitation of the wives of India, she prepares to throw herself headlong from a high precipice. She is prevented by her father, who interposes his paternal authority, as predominating over a rash and unlawful promise.

CHAP. vii. Under the reign of Dioclesian, a noble knight had two sons, the youngest of which marries a harlot.

This story, but with a difference of circumstances, ends like the beautiful apologue of the Prodigal Son.

CHAP. viii. The Emperor Leo commands three female statues to be made. One has a gold ring on a finger pointing forward, another a beard of gold, and the third a golden cloak and purple tunic. Who-

ever steals any of these ornaments, is to be punished with an ignominious death.

This story is copied by Gower, in the *Confessio Amantis*: but he has altered some of the circumstances. He supposes a statue of Apollo:

Of plate of golde a berde he hadde,  
The wiche his breft all ovir spradde:  
Of golde also without fayle  
His mantell was of large entayle,  
Besette with perrey all aboute:  
Forth ryght he straught his fynger oute,  
Upon the whiche he had a ryng,  
To seem it was a ryche thynge,  
A fyne carbuncle for the nones  
Moiste precious of all stones.<sup>1</sup>

In the sequel, Gower follows the substance of our author.

CHAP. x. Vespasian marries a wife in a distant country, who refuses to return home with him, and yet declares she will kill herself if he goes. The emperor ordered two rings to be made, of a wondrous efficacy; one of which, in the stone, has the image of Oblivion, the other the image of Memory: the ring of Oblivion he gave to the empress, and returned home with the ring of Memory.

CHAP. xi. The queen of the south sends her daughter to King Alexander, to be his concubine. She was exceedingly beautiful, but had been nourished with poison from her birth. Alexander's master, Aristotle, whose sagacity nothing could escape, knowing this, entreated that before she was admitted to the king's bed a malefactor condemned to death might be sent for, who should give her a kiss in the presence of the king. The malefactor, on kissing her, instantly dropped down dead. Aristotle, having explained his reasons for what he had done, was loaded with honours by the king, and the princess was dismissed to her mother.

This story is founded on the twenty-eighth chapter of Aristotle's *Secretum Secretorum*: in which a queen of India is said to have treacherously sent to Alexander, among other costly presents, the pretended testimonies of her friendship, a girl of exquisite beauty who, having been fed with serpents from her infancy, partook of their nature.<sup>2</sup> [A legend is extant of Richard Cœur-de-lion, that the Saracens endeavoured to entrap him in a somewhat similar manner.] If I recollect right, in Pliny there are accounts of nations whose natural food was poison. Mithridates, king of Pontus, the land of venomous herbs, and the country of the sorceress Medea, was sup-

<sup>1</sup> Lib. v. fol. 122, b.

<sup>2</sup> This I now cite from a Latin translation without date, but evidently printed before 1500. It is dedicated to Guido Vere de Valencia, Bishop of Tripoli, by his most humble clerk, Philippus: who says, that he found this treatise in Arabic at Antioch, quo carebant Latini, and that therefore, and because the Arabic copies were scarce, he translated it into Latin. This printed copy does not exactly correspond with MS. Bodl. 495, membr. 4to. In the last, Alexander's miraculous horn is mentioned at fol. 45, b. In the former, in ch. lxxii. The dedication is the same in both.

posed to eat poison. Sir John Maundeville's *Travels*, I believe, will afford other instances.

CHAP. xii. A profligate priest, in the reign of the Emperor Otto, or Otho, walking in the fields, and neglecting to say mass, is reformed by a vision of a comely old man.

CHAP. xiii. An empress, having lost her husband, becomes so dotingly fond of her only son, then three years of age, as not to bear his absence for a moment. They sleep together every night, and when he was eighteen years of age, she proves with child by him. She murders the infant, and her left hand is immediately marked with four circles of blood. Her repentance is related, in consequence of a vision of the holy virgin.

This story is in the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent of Beauvais, who wrote about the year 1250.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP. xiv. Under the reign of the Emperor Dorotheus, a remarkable example of the filial piety of a young man, who redeems his father, a knight, from captivity.

CHAP. xv. Eufemian, a nobleman in the court of the Emperor of Rome, is attended by three thousand servants girt with golden belts, and clothed in silken vestments. His house was crowded with pilgrims, orphans, and widows, for whom three tables were kept every day. He has a son Alexius, who quits his father's palace, and lives unknown seventeen years in a monastery in Syria. He then returns, and lives seventeen years undiscovered as a pilgrim in his father's family, where he suffers many indignities from the servants.

Alexius or Alexis was canonised. The story is taken from his Legend.<sup>2</sup> In the metrical *Lives of the Saints*, his life is told in a sort of measure different from that of the rest, and not very common in the earlier stages of our poetry. It begins thus :

Lefteneth alle and herkeneth me,  
ȝonge and olde, bonde and fre,  
And ich ȝow telle sone,  
How a ȝonge man, gent and fre,  
By gan this worldis wele to fie,  
Y-born he was in Rome.

In Rome was a doȝty man  
That was y cleped Eufemian,  
Man of moche myȝte ;  
Gold and seluer he hadde ynowȝ,  
Hall and boures, oxe and plouȝ,  
And swith wel it dyȝte.

When Alexius returns home in disguise, and asks his father about his son, the father's feelings are thus described :

So sone so he spake of his sone,  
The guode man, as was his wone,  
Gan to fike<sup>3</sup> sore ;  
His herte fel<sup>4</sup> so colde so ston,  
The teres felle to his ton,<sup>5</sup>  
On his berd hore.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. vii. cap. 93, *seq.* f. 86, b. edit. Ven.

<sup>2</sup> See Caxton, *Gold. Leg.* f. ccclxiii. b.      <sup>3</sup> figh.      <sup>4</sup> fel.      <sup>5</sup> [toes.]

At his burial, many miracles are wrought on the sick :

With mochel <sup>1</sup> fift,<sup>2</sup> and mochel song,  
That holy cors, hem alle among,  
Bischoppis to cherche bere.

Amyddes riȝt the heȝe strete,<sup>3</sup>

So moche folke hym gone mete

That they reſten a ſtonde,

All the ſike<sup>4</sup> that to him come,

I-heled wer ſwithe ſone

Of fet<sup>5</sup> and eke of honde

The blinde come to hare<sup>6</sup> fiȝt,

The crooked gonnes ſone riȝt,<sup>7</sup>

The lame for to go :

That dombe wer fonge<sup>8</sup> ſpeeche,

Thez herede<sup>9</sup> God the ſothe leche,<sup>10</sup>

And that halwe<sup>11</sup> alſo.

The day ſede and drouȝ to nyȝt,

No lenger dwelle<sup>12</sup> they ne myȝt,

To cherche they moſte wende ;

The bellen they gone to ryngē,

The clerkes heȝe<sup>13</sup> to ſyngē,

Everich in hiſt ende.<sup>14</sup>

Tho the corſe to cherche com

Glad they wer everichon

That they ycure wer,

The pope and the emperor

By fore and auter of ſeynt Savour

Ther ſette they the bere.

Aboute the bere was moche liȝt

With proude palle was bediȝt,

I-beten al with golde.<sup>15</sup>

The history of saint Alexius is told entirely in the same words in the *Gesta Romanorum* and in the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine,<sup>16</sup> tranſlated, through a French medium, by Caxton. This work of Jacobus does not conſist ſolely of the legends of the saints, but is interspersed with “multis aliis pulcherrimis et peregrinis historiis.”<sup>17</sup>

CHAP. xvi. A Roman emperor is digging for the foundation of a new palace, finds a golden ſarcophagus or coffin, inscribed with mysterious words and ſentences. Which being explained prove to be ſo many moral leſſons of inſtruction for the emperor’s future conduct.

CHAP. xvii. A poor man, named Guido, engages to ſerve an emperor of Rome in ſix ſeveral capacities or employmens. One of theſe ſervices is, to ſhow the beſt way to the holy land. Acquit-

<sup>1</sup> fighs.

<sup>2</sup> high-street.

<sup>3</sup> [All the ſick.—*Ritſon.*]

<sup>4</sup> feet.

<sup>5</sup> their.

<sup>6</sup> ſtraiȝt.

<sup>7</sup> found [took, received].

<sup>8</sup> heried, bleſſed.

<sup>9</sup> the true physician.

<sup>10</sup> hallow.

<sup>11</sup> tarry.

<sup>12</sup> at his ſeat in the choir.

<sup>13</sup> MSS. Coll. Trin. Oxon. Cod. 57, *ſupr. citat.*

<sup>12</sup> high.

<sup>14</sup> *Hijſtor.* lxxxix. f. clviii. edit. 1479. fol. And in Vincent of Beauvais, who quotes *Gesta Alexii. Specul. Hijſt.* Lib. xviii. cap. 43, *ſeq. f. 241*, b.

<sup>15</sup> In the Colophon.

ting himself in all with singular address and fidelity, he is made a knight, and loaded with riches.

CHAP. xviii. A knight named Julian is hunting a stag, who turns and says, "You will kill your father and mother." On this he went into a distant country, where he married a rich lady of a castle. Julian's father and mother travelled into various lands to find their son, and at length accidentally came to this castle in his absence; where, telling their story to the lady who had heard it from her husband, she discovered who they were, and gave them her own bed to sleep in. Early in the morning, while she was at mass in the chapel, her husband Julian unexpectedly returned; and entering his wife's chamber, perceived two persons in the bed, whom he immediately slew with his sword, hastily supposing them to be his wife and her adulterer. At leaving the chamber, he met his wife coming from the chapel; and with great astonishment asked her, who the persons were sleeping in her bed? She answered, "They are your parents, who have been seeking you so long, and whom I have honoured with a place in our own bed." Afterwards they founded a sumptuous hospital for the accommodation of travellers, on the banks of a dangerous river.

This story is told in [Voragine's] *Golden Legend*,<sup>1</sup> and in the metrical *Lives of the Saints*.<sup>2</sup> Hence Julian, or Saint Julian, was called *hospitator*, or the good harbourer; and the Pater Noster became famous which he used to say for the souls of his father and mother whom he had thus unfortunately killed.<sup>3</sup> The peculiar excellences of this prayer are displayed by Boccaccio.<sup>4</sup> Chaucer, speaking of the hospitable disposition of his Frankelein, says—

Saint Julian he was in his own countre.<sup>5</sup>

This history is, like the last, related by our compiler in the words of Julian's Legend, as it stands in Jacobus de Voragine.<sup>6</sup> Bollandus has inserted Antoninus's account of this saint, which appears also to be literally the same.<sup>7</sup> It is told, yet not exactly in the same words, by Vincent of Beauvais.<sup>8</sup>

I take this opportunity of observing, that the Legends of the Saints, so frequently referred to in the *Geſta Romanorum*, often contain high strokes of fancy, both in the structure and decorations of the story. That they should abound in extravagant conceptions, may be partly accounted for from the superstitious and visionary cast of the writer; but the truth is, they derive this complexion from the east. Some were originally forged by monks of the Greek church, to whom the oriental fictions and mode of fabling were familiar. The more early of the Latin lives were carried over to Constantinople, where they were translated into Greek with new

<sup>1</sup> Fol. 90, edit. 1493.

<sup>2</sup> MSS. Bodl. 1596, f. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Decam.* D. ii. N. 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Prol.* v. 342. See vol. ii. sect. xvii.

<sup>6</sup> *Hyſtor.* xxxii. f. lxii. a.

<sup>7</sup> *Act. Sanctor.* tom. ii. *Januar.* p. 974; *Antv.* 1643.

<sup>8</sup> *Specul. Hift.* lib. ix. c. 115, f. 115; *Venet.* 1591.

embellishments of eastern imagination. These being returned into Europe were translated into Latin, where they naturally superseded the old Latin archetypes. Others of the Latin lives contracted this tincture, from being written after the Arabian literature became common in Europe. The following ideas in the Life of Saint Pelagian evidently betray their original. “As the byshop sange masse in the cyte of Usanance, he saw thre dropes ryghte clere all of one gratenesse whiche were upon the auлер, and al thre ranne to gyder in to a precyous gemme: and whan they had set thys gemme in a crosse of golde, al the other precyous stones that were there, fyllen out, and thys gemme was clere to them that were clene out of synne, and it was obscure and dark to synners,”<sup>1</sup> &c. The peculiar cast of romantic invention was admirably suited to serve the purposes of superstition.

Possevin, a learned Jesuit, who wrote about the close of the sixteenth century, complains that for the last five hundred years the courts of all the princes in Europe had been infatuated by reading romances; and that in his time it was a mark of inelegance not to be familiarly acquainted with Lancelot du Lak, Perceforest, Tristan, Giron the Courteous, Amadis de Gaul, Primaleon, Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, and Ariosto. He even goes so far as to say, that the devil instigated Luther to procure a translation of Amadis from Spanish into French, for the purpose of facilitating his grand scheme of overthrowing the catholic religion. The popularity of this book, he adds, warped the minds of the French nation from their ancient notions and studies, introduced a neglect of the Scriptures, and propagated a love for astrology and other fantastic arts.<sup>2</sup> But with the leave of this zealous catholic I would observe that this sort of reading was likely to produce, if any, an effect quite contrary. The genius of romance and of popery was the same, and both were strengthened by the reciprocation of a similar spirit of credulity. The dragons and the castles of the one were of a piece with the visions and pretended miracles of the other. The ridiculous theories of false and unsolid science which, by the way, had been familiarised to the French by other romances long before the translation of Amadis, were surely more likely to be advanced under the influence of a religion founded on deception than in consequence of Luther’s reformed system, which aimed at purity and truth, and which was to gain its end by the suppression of ancient prejudices.

Many of the absurdities of the catholic worship were perhaps, as I have hinted, in some degree necessary in the early ages of the church, on account of the ignorance of the people; at least, under such circumstances they were natural, and therefore excusable. But when the world became wiser, those mummeries should have been abolished, for the same reason that the preachers left off quoting Æsop’s fables in their sermons, and the stage ceased to instruct the

<sup>1</sup> [Voragine’s] *Gold. Leg.* f. ccclxxxviii.

<sup>2</sup> *Biblioth. Select.* lib. i. cap. 25, p. 113, edit. 1593.

people in the scripture-history by the representations of the mysteries. The advocates of the papal communion do not consider that in a cultivated age, abounding with every species of knowledge, they continue to retain those fooleries which were calculated only for Christians in a condition of barbarism, and of which the use now no longer subsists.

CHAP. xix. When Julius Cæsar was preparing to pass the Rubicon, a gigantic spectre appeared from the middle of the river, threatening to interrupt his passage if he came not to establish the peace of Rome.<sup>1</sup> Our author cites the *Gesta Romanorum* for this story.

It was impossible that the Roman history could pass through the dark ages without being infected with many romantic corruptions. Indeed, the Roman was almost the only ancient history which the readers of those ages knew; and what related even to pagan Rome, the parent of the more modern papal metropolis of Christianity, was regarded with a superstitious veneration, and often magnified with miraculous additions.

CHAP. xx. The birth of the Emperor Henry, son of Earl Leopold, and his wonderful preservation from the stratagems of the Emperor Conrade, till his accession to the imperial throne.

This story is told in the *Golden Legend* under the life of Pelagian the pope, entitled, *Here followeth the lyf of Saynt Pelagien the pope, with many other historyes and gestys of the Lombardes, and of Machomete, with other cronycles.*<sup>2</sup> The *Gesta Longobardorum* are fertile in legendary matter, and furnished Jacobus de Voragine, Caxton's original, with many marvellous histories.<sup>3</sup> Caxton, from the *gestes of the Lombardis*, gives a wonderful account of a pestilence in Italy, under the reign of King Gilbert.<sup>4</sup>

[The *Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine originally appeared under the title of *Legenda Sanctorum* (a title varied in subsequent editions) without any note of date or place, but presumably about 1470. It was republished in 1475, 1476, 1480, 1483, and often besides. There is at least one other impression without printer's name or other indication.]

The latter part of the book contains a few saints not in the history of the Lombards, which forms the first part.

I have observed that Caxton's *Golden Legende* is taken from Voragine. This perhaps is not precisely true. Caxton informs us in his first preface to the first edition of 1483 that he had in his possession a Legend in French, another in Latin, and a third in English, which varied from the other two in many places; and that many histories were contained in the English collection which did not occur in the French and Latin. Therefore, says he, "I have

<sup>1</sup> [Mr. Garnett refers us to Lucan's *Pharsalia*, i. 185-92, for this story:

"Ut ventum est parvi Rubiconis ad undas,  
*Ingens visa duci patriæ trepidantis imago,*" &c.]

<sup>2</sup> Fol. ccclxxxvii. b.

<sup>3</sup> See his *Legend. Aur.* fol. cccxv.

<sup>4</sup> *Ubi supr. f. lxxvi.*

wryton One oute of the sayd three booke : which I have orderyd otherwyse than in the sayd *Englyshe Legende*, which was so to fore made." Caxton's English original might have been the old metrical *Lives of the Saints*.

CHAP. xxi. A story from Justin, concerning a conspiracy of the Spartans against their king.

CHAP. xxii. How the Egyptians deified Isis and Osiris. From Saint Austin. As is the following chapter.

CHAP. xxiv. Of a magician and his delicious garden, which he shows only to fools and to his enemies.

CHAP. xxv. Of a lady who keeps the staff and scrip of a stranger, who rescued her from the oppressions of a tyrant; but being afterwards courted by three kings, she destroys those memorials of her greatest benefactor.

CHAP. xxvi[i]. An emperor, visiting the holy land, commits his daughter and his favourite dog, who is very fierce, to the custody of five knights, under the superintendence of his seneschal. The seneschal neglects his charge: the knights are obliged to quit their post for want of necessaries; and the dog, being fed with the provisions assigned to the knights, grows fiercer, breaks his three chains, and kills the lady who was permitted to wander at large in her father's hall. When the emperor returns, the seneschal is thrown into a burning furnace.

CHAP. xxviii. The old woman and her little dog.

CHAP. xxx. The three honours and three dishonours, decreed by a certain king to every conqueror returning from war.

CHAP. xxxi. The speeches of the philosophers on seeing King Alexander's golden sepulchre.

CHAP. xxxiii. A man had three trees in his garden, on which his three wives successively hanged themselves. Another begs an offset from each of the trees, to be planted in the gardens of his married neighbours. [This is taken from the work entitled *Valerius ad Ru-*  
*finum De non ducendâ uxore*,<sup>1</sup> by Walter Mapes.]

CHAP. xxxiv. Aristotle's seven rules to his pupil Alexander.

This, I think, is from the *Secreta Secretorum*. Aristotle, for two reasons, was a popular character in the dark ages. He was the father of their philosophy, and had been the preceptor of Alexander the Great, one of the principal heroes of romance. Nor was Aristotle himself without his romantic history; in which he falls in love with a queen of Greece, who quickly confutes his subtlest syllogisms. [His *Secreta* were translated into English, and printed, in 1528.]

CHAP. xxxv. The *Gesta Romanorum* [that is, the Roman Annals,] cited, for the custom among the ancient Romans of killing a lamb for pacifying quarrels.

CHAP. xxxvi. Of a king who desires to know the nature of man. Solinus, *De Mirabilibus Mundi*, is here quoted.

<sup>1</sup> [MS. Reg. 12, D. xii. This is Sir F. Madden's correction. In Wright's collection of the *Poems attributed to Walter Mapes*, 1841, p. 77, the piece is printed under the title of *Golias De conjugie non ducendâ*.]

CHAP. xxxvii. Pliny's account of the stone which the eagle places in her nest, to avoid the poison of a serpent.

CHAP. xxxix. Julius Cæsar's mediation between two brothers. From the *Gesta Romanorum* [that is, as before, the Roman History].

We must not forget, that there was the romance of Julius Cæsar; and I believe Antony and Cleopatra were more known characters in the dark ages than is commonly supposed. Shakespeare is thought to have formed his play on this story from North's translation of Amyot's unauthentic French Plutarch, published at London in 1579. Montfaucon, among the manuscripts of Monsieur Lancelot, recites an old piece written about the year 1500, *La vie et fais de Marc Antoine le triumvir et de sa mie Cleopatra, translaté de l'historien Plutarque pour tres illustre haute et puissante dame Madame Françoise de Fouez Dame de Châteaubriaud*.<sup>1</sup> [It is very doubtful] whether this piece was ever printed. It least it shews that the story was familiar at a more early period than is imagined, and leads us to suspect that there might have been other materials used by Shakespeare on this subject, than those hitherto pointed out by his commentators.

That Amyot's French version of Plutarch should contain corruptions and innovations will easily be conceived, when it is remembered that he probably translated from an old Italian version.<sup>2</sup> A new exhibition in English of the French caricature of this most valuable biographer by North must have still more widely extended the deviation from the original.

CHAP. xl. The infidelity of a wife proved by feeling her pulse in conversation. From Macrobius.

CHAP. xlii. Valerius Maximus is cited concerning a column at Rome, inscribed with four letters four times written.

CHAP. xlii. Tiberius orders a maker of ductile glass, which could not be broken, to be beheaded, lest it should become more valuable than silver and gold.

This piece of history, which appears also in Cornelius Agrippa *De Vanitate Scientiarum*,<sup>3</sup> is taken from Pliny, or rather from his transcriber Isidore.<sup>4</sup> Pliny, in relating this story, says that the temperature of glass, so as to render it flexible, was discovered under the reign of Tiberius.

<sup>1</sup> *Bibl. Manusc.* tom. ii. p. 1669, col. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See *Bibl. Fr. de la Croix*, &c. tom. i. p. 388. Amyot was a great translator of Greek books; but, I fear, not always from the Greek. It is remarkable that he was rewarded with an abbacy for translating the *Theagenes* and *Chariclea* of Heliodorus; for writing which the author was deprived of a bishopric. He died about 1580.

<sup>3</sup> *Orig. lib. xvi. cap. xv. p. 1224. Apud Auct. Ling. Lat. 1602.* Isidore was a favourite Repertory of the middle age. He is cited for an account of the nature and qualities of the Falcon, in the Prologue to the second or metrical part of the old *Phebus des deduix de la chasse des Bestes sauvages et des oyseaux de Proye*, printed [by Antoine Verard, about 1500, in folio, and written by Gaston Phebus, Comte de Foix].

<sup>4</sup> Sanford's *English Translat.* cap. 90, p. 159, a. 1569.

In the same chapter Pliny observes, that glass is susceptible of all colours.<sup>1</sup> But the Romans, as the sentence below partly proves, probably never used any coloured glass for windows. The first notice of windows of a church made of coloured glass occurs in chronicles quoted by Muratori. In the year 802, a pope built a church at Rome, and, “*fenestras ex vitro diversis coloribus conclusit atque decoravit* ;”<sup>2</sup> and in 856, he produces “*fenestras vero vitreis coloribus*,”<sup>3</sup> &c. This however was a sort of mosaic in glass. To express figures in glass, or what we now call the art of painting in glass, was a very different work ; and I believe I can shew it was brought from Constantinople to Rome before the tenth century, with other ornamental arts. Guicciardini, who wrote about 1560, ascribes the invention of baking colours in glass for church windows to the Netherlanders :<sup>4</sup> but he does not mention the period, and I think he must be mistaken. It is certain that this art owed much to the laborious and mechanical genius of the Germans ; and, in particular, their deep researches and experiments in chemistry, which they cultivated in the dark ages with the most indefatigable assiduity, must have greatly assisted its operations. I could give very early anecdotes of this art in England.

CHAP. xlv. A king leaves four sons by his wife, only one [of whom] is lawfully begotten. They have a contest for the throne. The dispute is referred to the deceased king's secretary, who orders the body to be taken from the tomb ; and decrees that the son who can shoot an arrow deepest into it shall be king. The first wounds the king's right hand ; the second his mouth ; the third his heart. The last wound is supposed to be the successful one. At length the fourth, approaching the body, cried out with a lamentable voice, “*Far be it from me to wound my father's body !*” In consequence of this speech, he is pronounced by the nobles and people present to be the true heir, and placed on the throne.

CHAP. xlviii. Dionysius is quoted for the story of Perillus's brazen bull.

Gower, in the *Confessio Amantis*, has this story, which he prefaces by saying that he found it in a *Cronike*.<sup>5</sup> In the Golden Legend, Macrobius is called a chronicle. “*Macrobius sayth in a cronike.*”<sup>6</sup> Chronicles are naturally the first efforts of the literature of a barbarous age. The writers, if any, of those periods are seldom equal to any thing more than a bare narrative of facts : and such sort of matter is suitable to the taste and capacity of their contemporary readers. A further proof of the principles advanced in the beginning of this Dissertation.

<sup>1</sup> “*Fit et album, et murrinum, aut hyacinthos sapphirosque imitatum, et omnibus aliis coloribus. Nec est alia nunc materia sequacior, aut etiam picture accommodatior. Maximus tamen honor in candido.*” *Nat. Hist.* lib. xxxvi. cap. xvi. p. 725, edit. 1615.

<sup>2</sup> *Diffr. Antichit. Ital.* tom. i. c. xxiv. p. 287.

<sup>4</sup> *Descritt. di tutti i Paesi-Bassi*, edit. Plantin.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. vii. f. 161, b. col. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 281.

<sup>6</sup> Fol. lxii. b.

CHAP. xlix. The Duchess Rosmilla falls in love with Conan, king of Hungary, whom she sees from the walls of the city of Forum-Julii, which he is besieging. She has four sons and two daughters. She betrays the city to Conan, on condition that he will marry her the next day. Conan, a barbarian, executed the contract, but on the third day exposed her to his whole army, saying, "Such a wife deserves such a husband."

Paulus, that is, Paulus Diaconus, the historian of the Longobardi, is quoted. He was chancellor of Desiderius, the last king of the Lombards, with whom he was taken captive by Charlemagne. The history here referred to is entitled *Gesta Longobardorum*.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP. l. From Valerius Maximus.

CHAP. li. From Josephus.

CHAP. lii. From Valerius Maximus.

CHAP. liii. From the same.

CHAP. liv. The Emperor Frederick's marble portico near Capua.

I wonder there are not more romances extant on the lives of the Roman Emperors of Germany; many of whom, to say no more, were famous in the crusades. There is a romance in old German rhyme, called [*Tewrdannck* or *Thewrdannck*], on Maximilian I. written by Melchior Pfinzing his chaplain. It was printed at Nuremberg in 1517.<sup>2</sup>

CHAP. lv. Of a king who has one son exceedingly beautiful, and four daughters, named Justice, Truth, Mercy, and Peace.

CHAP. lvi. A nobleman invited a merchant to his castle, whom he met accordingly upon the road. At entering the castle the merchant was astonished at the magnificence of the chambers, which were overlaid with gold. At supper, the nobleman placed the merchant next to his wife; and the former immediately showed evident tokens of being much struck with her beauty. The table was covered with the richest dainties; but while all were served in golden dishes, a pittance of meat was placed before the lady in a dish made out of a human skull. The merchant was surprised and terrified at this strange spectacle. At length he was conducted to bed in a fair chamber where, when left alone, he observed a glimmering lamp in a nook or corner of the room, by which he discovered two dead bodies hung up by the arms. He was now filled with the most horrible apprehensions, and could not sleep all the night. When he rose in the morning, he was asked by the nobleman how he liked his entertainment? He answered, "There is plenty of everything; but the skull prevented me from eating at supper, and the two dead bodies which I saw in my chamber from sleeping. With your leave therefore I will depart."

<sup>1</sup> See lib. iv. cap. xxviii. *Apud Muratorii Scriptor. Ital.* i. p. 465. Where she is called Romilda. The king is Cacan, or Cacanus, a king of the Huns. There are some fine circumstances of distress in Paulus's description of this siege.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. on vellum. It is not printed with moveable types; but every page is graved in wood or brass. With wooden cuts. It is a most beautiful book. [See a fuller and better account in Brunet, *dern. edit.* v. 767.]

The nobleman answered, "My friend, you observed the beauty of my wife. The skull which you saw placed before her at supper was the head of a duke whom I detected in her embraces ; and which I cut off with my own sword. As a memorial of her crime, and to teach her modest behaviour, her adulterer's skull is made to serve for her dish. The bodies of the two young men hanging in the chamber are my two kinsmen, who were murdered by the son of the duke. To keep up my sense of revenge for their blood, I visit their dead bodies every day. Go in peace, and remember to judge nothing without knowing the truth."

[The English *Legenda Aurea*] has the history of Alb[oin], a king of the Lombards, who having conquered another king, "lade awaie wyth hym Rosamonde his wyf in captvyte, but after he took hyr to hys wyf, and he dyde do make a cuppe of the skulle of that kynge and closed in fyne golde and sylver, and dranke out of it."<sup>1</sup> This, by the way, is the story of the old Italian tragedy of Messer Giovanni Rucellai, planned on the model of the antients, and acted in the Rucellai gardens at Florence, before Leo X. and his court, in the year 1516. [Davenant founded his earliest dramatic production upon the same tale.]

A most sanguinary scene in [the old drama of] *Titus Andronicus*, an incident in Dryden's or Boccaccio's *Tancred and Sigismonda*, and the catastrophe of the beautiful metrical romance of the *Lady of Faguel*,<sup>2</sup> are founded on the same horrid ideas of inhuman retaliation and savage revenge : but in the last two pieces, the circumstances are so ingeniously imagined, as to lose a considerable degree of their atrocity, and to be productive of the most pathetic and interesting situations.

CHAP. lvii. The enchanter Virgil places a magical image in the middle of Rome, which communicates to the Emperor Titus all the secret offences committed every day in the city.<sup>3</sup>

This story is in the old [romance of *Virgilius*, published at Antwerp about 1520.]

Vincent of Beauvais relates many wonderful things, *mirabiliter aetitata*, done by the poet Virgil, whom he represents as a magician. Among others, he says, that Virgil fabricated those brazen statues at Rome, called *Salvacio Romae*, which were the gods of the provinces conquered by the Romans. Every one of these statues held in its hand a bell framed by magic ; and when any province was meditating a revolt, the statue, or idol of that country struck his bell.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Golden Leg.* f. ccclxxxvii. a, edit. 1493. The compilers of the *Sanctilogie* probably took this story from Paulus Diaconus, *Gest. Longobard*, *ut supr.* lib. ii. cap. xxviii, p. 435, seq. It has been adopted, as a romantic tale, into the *Histoires Tragiques* of Belleforest, p. 297, edit. 1580. The English reader may find it in Heylin's *Cosmographie*, B. i. col. i. p. 57. And in Machiavel's *History of Florence*, in English, 1680, B. 1, p. 5, seq. See also Lydgate's *Bochas*, B. ix. ch. xxvii.

<sup>2</sup> [Remains of the Early Pop. Poetry of England, ii.]

<sup>3</sup> In the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, Nov. [vi. Sir F. Madden says that Warton borrows here from Tyrwhitt, but that he (Sir F. M.) cannot find the story in the edit. of the novels printed in 1525.]

<sup>4</sup> *Specul. Histor.* lib. iv. cap. 61, f. 66, a.

This fiction is mentioned by the old anonymous author of the *Mirabilia Romæ*, written in the thirteenth century, and printed by Montfaucon.<sup>1</sup> It occurs in Lydgate's *Bochas*. He is speaking of the Pantheon:

Whyche was a temple of old foundation,  
Ful of ydols, up set on hye stages ;  
There through the worlde of every nacion  
Were of theyr goddes set up great ymages,  
To every kingdom direct were their vilages,  
As poetes and Fulgens<sup>2</sup> by hys live  
In bokes olde plainly doth dyscrive.  
Every ymage had in his hande a bell,  
As apperteyneth to every nacion,  
Which, by craft some token should tell  
Whan any kingdom fil in rebellion, &c.<sup>3</sup>

This fiction is not in Boccaccio, Lydgate's original. It is in the above-cited Gothic history of Virgil. Gower's Virgil, I think, belongs to the same romance.

And eke Virgil of acquaintance  
I sigh, where he the maiden prayd,  
Which was the daughter, as men sayd,  
Of the emperour whilom of Rome.<sup>4</sup>

CHAP. lviii. King Asmodeus pardons every malefactor condemned to death, who can tell three indisputable truths or maxims.

CHAP. lix. The Emperor Jovinian's history.

On this there is an antient French Moralite, entitled, *L'Orgueil et presomption de l'Empereur Jovinian*,<sup>5</sup> [and of several other productions of a dramatic or poetical cast ; among others, the *Lyfe of Robert the Deuyll*, originally printed in French at Lyons in 1496, and] of *Robert King of Sicily*, an old English poem or romance, from which I have given copious extracts, [and which is substantially the same story.]<sup>6</sup>

CHAP. lx. A king has a daughter named Rosimund, aged ten years, exceedingly beautiful, and so swift of foot, that her father promises her in marriage to any man who can overcome her in running. But those who fail in the attempt are to lose their heads. After many trials, in which she was always victorious, she loses the race with a poor man, who throws in her way a silken girdle, a garland of roses, and a silken purse inclosing a golden ball, inscribed,

<sup>1</sup> *Diar. Ital.* cap. xx. p. 288, edit. 1702. Many wonders are also related of Rome, in [a descriptive poem] called *The Stacyons of Rome*, in which Romulus is said to be born of the *duches of Troye*. [Early English Text Society, ed. Furnivall, 1867], MSS. Cotton, Calig. A. 2, [MS. Vernon (edited by Furnivall), and MSS. Lambeth. There is a prose abstract in the Porkington MS. This is also printed in Mr. Furnivall's volume.]

<sup>2</sup> Fulgentius.

<sup>3</sup> *Tragedies of Bochas*, B. ix. ch. i. ft. 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Confes. Amant.* l. viii. f. clxxxix. a, col. 2.

<sup>5</sup> [This is not included in M. Violet Le Duc's *Ancien Theatre François*, 1854, where, however, there are some other productions of the same class. See particularly, vol. iii. Nos. 53-4.]

<sup>6</sup> [Remains of the Early Popular Poetry of England, i. 264-9.]

“Who so plays with me will never be satiated with play.” She marries the poor man, who inherits her father’s kingdom.

This is evidently a Gothic innovation of the classical tale of Atalanta. But it is not impossible that an oriental apologue might have given rise to the Grecian fable.

CHAP. lxi. The Emperor Claudius marries his daughter to the philosopher Socrates.

CHAP. lxii. Florentina’s picture.

CHAP. lxiii. Vespafian’s daughter’s garden. All her lovers are obliged to enter this garden before they can obtain her love, but none returns alive. The garden is haunted by a lion, and has only one entrance, which divides into so many windings, that it never can be found again. At length, she furnishes a knight with a ball or clue of thread, and teaches him how to foil the lion. Having achieved this adventure, he marries the lady.

Here seems to be an allusion to [Ariadne’s] history.

CHAP. lxiv. A virgin is married to a king, because she makes him a shirt of a piece of cloth three fingers long and broad.

CHAP. lxv. A cross with four inscriptions.

CHAP. lxvi. A knight offers to recover a lady’s inheritance, which had been seized by a tyrant, on condition, that if he is slain, she shall always keep his bloody armour hanging in her chamber. He regains her property, although he dies in the attempt; and as often as she was afterwards sued for in marriage, before she gave an answer, she returned to her chamber, and contemplating with tears her deliverer’s bloody armour, resolutely rejected every solicitation.

CHAP. lxvii. The wise and foolish knight.

CHAP. lxviii. A woman understands the language of birds. The three cocks.

CHAP. lxix. A mother gives to a man who marries her daughter a shirt, which can never be torn, nor will ever need washing while they continue faithful to each other.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP. lxx. The king’s daughter who requires three impossible things of her lovers.

CHAP. lxxii. The king who resigns his crown to his son.

CHAP. lxxiv. The golden apple.

CHAP. lxxv. A king’s three daughters marry three dukes, who all die the same year.

CHAP. lxxvi. The two physicians.

CHAP. lxxix. The fable of the familiar as.

CHAP. lxxx. A devout hermit lived in a cave, near which a shepherd folded his flock. Many of the sheep being stolen, the shepherd was unjustly killed by his master as being concerned in the theft. The hermit seeing an innocent man put to death, began to suspect the existence of a Divine Providence, and resolved no longer

<sup>1</sup> [I scarcely perceive the supposed intimate resemblance between this tale and that of the *Wright’s Chaste Wife*, recently edited by Mr. Furnivall from the Lambeth MS.]

to perplex himself with the useless severities of religion, but to mix in the world. In travelling from his retirement, he was met by an angel in the figure of a man who said, "I am an angel, and am sent by God to be your companion on the road." They entered a city, and begged for lodging at the house of a knight, who entertained them at a splendid supper. In the night the angel rose from his bed, and strangled the knight's only child who was asleep in the cradle. The hermit was astonished at this barbarous return for so much hospitality, but was afraid to make any remonstrance to his companion. Next morning they went to another city. Here they were liberally received in the house of an opulent citizen; but in the night the angel rose, and stole a golden cup of inestimable value. The hermit now concluded that his companion was a Bad Angel. In travelling forward the next morning, they passed over a bridge; about the middle of which they met a poor man, of whom the angel asked the way to the next city. Having received the desired information, the angel pushed the poor man into the water, where he was immediately drowned. In the evening they arrived at the house of a rich man, and begging for a lodging, were ordered to sleep in a shed with the cattle. In the morning the angel gave the rich man the cup which he had stolen. The hermit, amazed that the cup which was stolen from their friend and benefactor should be given to one who refused them a lodging, began to be now convinced that his companion was the Devil, and begged to go on alone. But the angel said, "Hear me, and depart. When you lived in your hermitage a shepherd was killed by his master. He was innocent of the supposed offence: but had he not been then killed, he would have committed crimes in which he would have died impenitent. His master endeavours to atone for the murder, by dedicating the remainder of his days to alms and deeds of charity. I strangled the child of the knight. But know, that the father was so intent on heaping up riches for this child, as to neglect those acts of public munificence for which he was before so distinguished, and to which he has now returned. I stole the golden cup of the hospitable citizen. But know, that from a life of the strictest temperance he became, in consequence of possessing this cup, a perpetual drunkard; and is now the most abstemious of men. I threw the poor man into the water. He was then honest and religious. But know, had he walked one half a mile further, he would have murdered a man in a state of mortal sin. I gave the golden cup to the rich man who refused to take us within his roof. He has therefore received his reward in this world, and in the next will suffer the pains of hell for his inhospitality." The hermit fell prostrate at the angel's feet; and requesting forgiveness, returned to his hermitage, fully convinced of the wisdom and justice of God's government.

This is the fable of Parnell's Hermit, which that elegant yet original writer has heightened with many masterly touches of poetical colouring, and a happier arrangement of circumstances. Among other proofs which might be mentioned of Parnell's genius

and address in treating this subject, by reserving the discovery of the angel to a critical period at the close of the fable, he has found means to introduce a beautiful description and an interesting surprise.<sup>1</sup> In this poem the last instance of the angel's seeming injustice is that of pushing the guide from the bridge into the river. At this, the hermit is unable to suppress his indignation—

Wild sparkling rage inflames the Father's eyes,  
He bursts the bonds of fear, and madly cries,  
"Detested wretch!"—But scarce his speech began,  
When the strange partner seem'd no longer man:  
His youthful face grew more serenely sweet,  
His robe turn'd white, and flow'd upon his feet;  
Fair rounds of radiant points invest his hair;  
Celestial odours fill the purple air:  
And wings, whose colours glitter'd on the day,  
Wide at his back their gradual plumes display,  
The form ethereal bursts upon his sight,  
And moves in all the majesty of light.

The same apologue occurs, with some slight additions and variations for the worse, in Howell's *Letters*; [Howell] professes to have taken it from the speculative Sir Philip Herbert's *Conceptions*; <sup>2</sup> these Letters were published [between 1647 and] 1650. It is also found in the *Divine Dialogues* of Dr. Henry More,<sup>3</sup> who has illustrated its important moral with the following fine reflections: "The affairs of this world are like a curious, but intricately contrived Comedy; and we cannot judge of the tendency of what is past, or acting at present, before the entrance of the last act, which shall bring in righteousness in triumph: who, though she hath abided many a brunt, and has been very cruelly and despightfully used hitherto in the world, yet at last, according to our desires, we shall see the knight overcome the giant. For what is the reason we are so much pleased with the reading romances and the fictions of the poets, but that here, as Aristotle says, things are set down as they should be; but in the true history hitherto of the world, things are recorded indeed as they are, but it is but a testimony, that they have not been as they should be? Wherefore, in the upshot of all, when we shall see that come to pass, that so mightily pleases us in the reading the most ingenious plays and heroic poems, that long afflicted vertue at last comes to the crown, the mouth of all unbelievers must be for ever stopped. And for my own part, I doubt not but that it will so come to pass in the close of the world. But impatiently to call for vengeance upon every enormity before that time, is rudely to overturn the stage before the entrance into

[<sup>1</sup> But Parnell was indebted for most of the plot and plan of his poem to a narrative in Sir Percy Herbert's *Conceptions*, 1652.]

<sup>2</sup> Vol. iv. Let. iv. p. 7, edit. 1655, 8vo.

<sup>3</sup> Part i. p. 321, Dial. ii. edit. Lond. 1668, 12mo. I must not forget that it occurs, as told in our *Gesta*, among a collection of Latin Apologues, quoted above, MSS. Harl. 463, fol. 8, a. The rubric is, *De Angelo qui duxit Heremitem ad diversa Hospita*. [Printed in Wright's *Latin Stories*, 1842, pp. 10-12. It is also one of the *fabliaux*.]

the fifth act, out of ignorance of the plot of the comedy ; and to prevent the solemnity of the general judgment by more paltry and particular executions.”<sup>1</sup>

Parnell seems to have chiefly followed the story as it is told by this Platonic theologist, who had not less imagination than learning. Pope used to say, that it was originally written in Spanish. This I do not believe: but from the early connection between the Spaniards and the Arabians this assertion tends to confirm the suspicion, that it was an oriental tale.

CHAP. lxxxi. A king violates his sister. The child is exposed in a chest in the sea; is christened Gregory by an abbot who takes him up, and after various adventures is promoted to the popedom. In their old age his father and mother go a pilgrimage to Rome, in order to confess to this pope, not knowing he was their son, and he being equally ignorant that they are his parents: when, in the course of the confession, a discovery is made on both sides.

CHAP. lxxxix. The three rings.

This story is in the *Decameron*,<sup>2</sup> in the *Centa Novelle Antiche*:<sup>3</sup> and perhaps in Swift’s *Tale of a Tub*.

CHAP. xcv. The tyrant Maxentius. From the *Gesta Romanorum* [that is, the Roman History] which are cited.

I think there is the romance of Maxence, Constantine’s antagonist.

CHAP. xcvi. King Alexander places a burning candle in his hall, and makes proclamation, that he will absolve all those who owe him forfeitures of life and land, if they will appear before the candle is consumed.

CHAP. xcvi. Prodigies before the death of Julius Cæsar, who is placed in the twenty-second year of the city. From the *Chronica*, as they are called.

CHAP. xcix. A knight saves a serpent who is fighting in a forest with a toad,<sup>4</sup> but is afterwards bit by the toad. The knight languishes many days: and when he is at the point of death, the same serpent, which he remembers, enters his chamber, and sucks the poison from the wound.

CHAP. ci. Of Ganterus who, for his prowess in war being elected a king of a certain country, is on the night of his coronation conducted to a chamber, where at the head of the bed is a fierce lion, at the feet a dragon, and on either side a bear, toads, and serpents. He immediately quitted his new kingdom, and was quickly elected king of another country. Going to rest the first night, he was led into a chamber furnished with a bed richly embroidered, but stuck all over with sharp razors. This kingdom he also relinquishes. At length he meets a hermit, who gives him a staff, with which he is directed to knock at the gate of a magnificent palace seated on a lofty

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.* p. 335.

<sup>2</sup> i. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Nov. lxxi.

<sup>4</sup> The stories, perhaps fabulous, of the serpent fighting with his inveterate enemy the weazel, who eats rue before the attack begins, and of the serpent fighting with and being killed by the spider, originate from Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* x. 84, xx. 13.

mountain. Here he gains admittance, and finds every sort of happiness unembittered with the least degree of pain.

The king means every man advanced to riches and honour, and who thinks to enjoy these advantages without interruption and alloy. The hermit is religion, the staff penitence, and the palace heaven.

In a more confined sense, the first part of this apologue may be separately interpreted to signify, that a king when he enters on his important charge, ought not to suppose himself to succeed to the privilege of an exemption from care, and to be put into immediate possession of the highest pleasures, conveniences, and felicities of life; but to be sensible that from that moment he begins to encounter the greatest dangers and difficulties.

CHAP. cii. Of the lady of a knight who went to the holy land. She commits adultery with a clerk skilled in necromancy. Another magician discovers her intrigues to the absent knight by means of a polished mirror and his image in wax.

In [the] gest or romance of *Alexander*, [ascribed to Adam Davie], Nectabanus, a king and magician, discovers the machinations of his enemies by embattelling them in figures of wax. This is the most extensive necromantic operation of the kind that I remember, and must have formed a puppet-show equal to the most splendid pantomime.

Barounes weore whilom wys and gode,  
That this ars<sup>1</sup> wel undurstode :  
Ac on ther was Neptanamous  
Wis<sup>2</sup> in this ars and malicious :  
Whan kyng other earl<sup>3</sup> cam on him to weorre<sup>4</sup>  
Quyk he loked in the storre ;<sup>5</sup>  
Of wax made him pupetts,<sup>6</sup>  
And made heom fyshte with batten :  
And so he learned, *je vous dy*,  
Ay to aquelle<sup>7</sup> hys enemye,  
With charme and with conjurissons :  
Thus he asaied the regiouns,  
That him cam for to asaile,  
In puyr<sup>8</sup> manyr of bataile ;  
By cler candel in the nyȝt,  
He mad uchon<sup>10</sup> with othir to fyȝt,  
Of alle manere nacyouns,  
That comen by schip or dromouns.  
At the laste, of mony londe  
Kynges therof haden gret onde,<sup>11</sup>  
Well thrity y gadred boeth,<sup>12</sup>  
And by spekith al his deth.<sup>13</sup>  
Kyng Philipp<sup>14</sup> of grete thede  
Maister was of that fede :<sup>15</sup>  
He was<sup>16</sup> a mon of myȝt hond,  
With hem brouȝte, of divers lond,

<sup>1</sup> art, necromancy.

<sup>2</sup> wise.

<sup>3</sup> or earl.

<sup>4</sup> war.

<sup>5</sup> stars.

<sup>6</sup> puppets.

<sup>7</sup> conquer.

<sup>8</sup> very, real.

<sup>9</sup> See Chaucer's *Cant.* *T.* ver. 1281.

<sup>10</sup> each one.

<sup>11</sup> had great jealousy or anger.

<sup>12</sup> near thirty were gathered, or confederated.

<sup>13</sup> all resolved to destroy him.

<sup>14</sup> Philip of Macedon.

<sup>15</sup> felds, field, army.

Nyne and twenty ryche kynges,  
 To make on hym batlynges :  
 Neptanamous hyt underfod ;  
 Ychaunged was al his mod ;  
 He was aferde sore of harme :  
 Anon he deede <sup>1</sup> caste his charme ;  
 His ymage he madde anon,  
 And of his barounes everychon,  
 And afterward of his fone ;<sup>2</sup>  
 He dude him to gedere to gon <sup>3</sup> :  
 In a basyn al by charme :  
 He fash on him fel theo harme ;  
 He seyȝ flyȝ <sup>4</sup> of his barounes  
 Of al his lond distincȝtions,  
 He lokid, and knew in the sterre,  
 Of al this kynges theo grete werre, <sup>5</sup> &c. <sup>6</sup>

Afterwards he frames an image of the Queen Olympias or Olympia, while sleeping, whom he violates in the shape of a dragon.

Theo lady lyȝt <sup>7</sup> on hire bedde,  
 Yheoled <sup>8</sup> wel with silken webbe,  
 In a chaysel <sup>10</sup> smok scheo lay,  
 And yn a mantell of doway :  
 Of theo bryȝtnes of hire face  
 Al about schone the place.<sup>11</sup>  
 Herbes he tok in an herber,  
 And stamped them in a morter,  
 And wrong <sup>12</sup> hit in a box :  
 After he tok virgyn wox,

<sup>1</sup> he did.

<sup>2</sup> enemies.

<sup>3</sup> he made them fight.

<sup>4</sup> he saw the harm fall on, or against, himself.

<sup>5</sup> saw fly.

<sup>6</sup> the great war of all these kings.

<sup>7</sup> MSS. Bodl. Bibl. Laud, 1. 74, f. 54.

<sup>8</sup> laid. <sup>9</sup> covered.

<sup>10</sup> In the Romance of *Atis et Porphylium*. Cod. Reg. Par. 7191.

“Un chemis de chaisil  
 De fil, et d’œuvre moult soutil.”

<sup>11</sup> Perhaps in *Syr Launfal*, the same situation is more elegantly touched. MSS. Cotton. *Calig.* A 2, fol. 35 a. [ed. 1845, p. 11.]

“In the pavyloun he fond a bed of prys,  
 I-heled with purpur bys  
 That semylé was of fyȝte ;  
 Therinne lay that lady gent,  
 That after fyȝt Launfal hedde y-fente,  
 That lefsome lemede bryȝt :  
 For hete her clothes down sche dede,  
 Almeft to her gerdyl stede ;  
 Than lay sche uncovert :  
 Sche was as whyt as lylle yn May,  
 Or snow that sneweth yn winterys day ;  
 He seyȝ never non so pert,  
 The rede rose whan sche ys newe  
 Azens her rode nes nauȝe of hewe,  
 I dar weile say yn fert  
 Her here schon as gold wyre,” &c.

[The early printed edition, of which an imperfect copy exists, varies slightly from this.]

<sup>12</sup> wrung.

And made a popet after the quene,  
His ars-table<sup>1</sup> he can unwrene;  
The quenes name in the wax he wrot,  
Whil hit was sumdel hot:  
In a bed he did dyȝt  
Al aboute with candel lyȝt,  
And spreyned<sup>2</sup> theron of the herbus:  
Thus charmed Neptanabus.  
The lady in her bed lay  
Abouȝt mydnyȝt, at the day,<sup>3</sup>  
Whiles he made conjuryng,  
Scheo<sup>4</sup> fawe fle,<sup>5</sup> in her metyng,<sup>6</sup>  
Hire thought, a dragoun lyȝt,  
To hire chaumbre he made his flyȝt,  
In he cam to her bouri  
And crept undur hir covertour,  
Mony fithes<sup>7</sup> he hire kuſt<sup>8</sup>  
And fast in his armes pruſt,  
And went away so dragon wyld,  
And grete he left hire with child.<sup>9</sup>

Theocritus, Virgil, and Horace have left instances of incantations conducted by figures in wax. In the beginning of the last century, many witches were executed for attempting the lives of persons, by fabricating representations of them in wax and clay. King James I., in his *Daemonologie*, speaks of this practice as very common; the efficacy of which he peremptorily ascribes to the power of the devil.<sup>10</sup> His majesty's arguments, intended to prove

<sup>1</sup> This is described above, f. 55.

"Of gold he made a table  
Al ful of steorron [stars]."

An astrolabe is intended.

**sprinkled.**

<sup>3</sup> before day,

the

5 fly.

6 dream.

7 times

<sup>8</sup> kissed her.

<sup>9</sup> Fol. 57. MSS. Bodl. *ut supr.* Compared with MSS. *Hospit. Lincoln*, 150. See Gower's *Confess. Amant.* lib. vi. fol. cxxxviii. a, col. 1. *seq.*

"And through the crafte of artemage,  
Of waxe he forged an ymage," &c.

Gower's dragon, in approaching the queen, is *courteis* and *debonaire*.

“With al the chere that he maie,  
Towarde the bedde ther as she laie,  
Till he came to hir the beddes side  
And she laie still, and nothyng cride;  
For he did all bys thynges faire,  
And was curteis and deponaire.”

*Ibid.* col. 2. I could not resist the temptation of transcribing this gallantry of a dragon. Gower's whole description of this interview, as will appear on comparison, seems to be taken from [Vincent of] Beauvais, "Nectabonus se transformat in illum draconis seductiorem tractum, tricliniumque penetrat reptabundus, specie spectabilis, tum majestate totius corporis, tum etiam sibilorum acumine adeo terribilis, ut parietes etiam ac fundamenta domus quasi viderentur," &c. *Hist. Specul.* fol. 41, b, *ut supr.* See Aul. Gell. *No& Att.* vii. 1. [The incident of the devil who, it is presumed, is identical with the dragon of this story, violating the chastity of a lady in the disguise of her husband, is in the *Life of Robert the Devil*.]

<sup>10</sup> Edit. 1603, 4to. B ii. ch. iv. p. 44, *seq.*

how the magician's image operated on the person represented, are drawn from the depths of moral, theological, physical, and metaphysical knowledge. The Arabian magic abounded with these infatuations, which were partly founded on the doctrine of sympathy.

But to return to the *Gesta Romanorum*. In this story one of the magicians is styled *Magister peritus*, and sometimes simply *Magister*. That is, a *cunning-man*. The title *Magister* in our universities has its origin from the use of this word in the middle ages. With what propriety it is now continued I will not say. *Mystery*, antiently used for a particular art,<sup>1</sup> [not, as has been sometimes pretended, derived from] *Maistry* or *Mastery*, the English of the Latin *Magisterium* or *Artificium*; in French *Maistrie*, *Mestier*, *Mestrie*, and in Italian *Magisterio*, with the same sense.<sup>2</sup> In the French romance of *Cleomedes*, a physician is called simply *Maitre*.<sup>3</sup>

Lie font de chou qu'il n'y a  
Peril et que bien garira :  
Car il li *Maistre* ainsi dit leur ont.

And the medical art is styled *Mestrie*.<sup>4</sup> *Maistrie* is used for art or workmanship, in the *Chronicle of Saint Denis*, “Entre les autres presens, li envoia une horologe de laton, ouvrez par marveilleuse Maistrie.”<sup>5</sup> That the Latin *Magisterium* has precisely the same sense appears from an account of the contract for building the conventional church of Casino in Italy, in the year 1349.<sup>6</sup> The architects agree to build the church in the form of the Lateran at Rome. Chaucer, in the *Romaunt of the Rose*, uses *Maistrie* for artifice and workmanship.

Was made a toure of grete *maistrie*,  
A fairer saugh no man with sight,  
Large, and wide, and of grete might,<sup>7</sup> &c.

<sup>1</sup> For instance, “the Art and *Mystery* of Printing.”

<sup>2</sup> In a statute of Henry VIII., instead of the words in the last note, we have “The *Science* and *Craft* of Printing.” Ann. Reg. 25 A.D. 1533. For many reasons, *Mystery*, answering to the Latin *Mysterium*, never could have been originally applied in these cases. [I have explained the origin of this use of the word *magister* in my last book, *Womankind in Western Europe*. When the freemen of the towns became rich, and held positions in municipal society,—formed in fact a municipal aristocracy,—they required a title of rank. They had no right to *dominus* or *domina*, so they took *magister* and *magistra*, which became in the vulgar tongue, *maistre* and *maistres*. *Magister*, of course, signified originally the man who was a *mater* in his profession. Hence a scholar became *mater in artis*, a lawyer, a *maistre du droit*, and so forth. I should suppose a trade or manufacture was a mystery, because its rules, &c. were kept in the utmost secrecy, and were only revealed to those who were duly qualified.—Wright.]

<sup>3</sup> MSS. Cod. Reg. Paris, 7539.

<sup>4</sup> “Quant il (the surgeon) aperçut que c'estoit maladie non mie curable par nature et par Mestrie, et par medicine,” &c. *Mirac. S. Ludov.* edit. reg. p. 438.

<sup>5</sup> Tom. v. *Collect. Histor. Franc.* pag. 254. Thus expressed in the Latin *Annales Francie*, ibid. p. 56. “*Horologium ex aurichalco arte mechanica mirifice compositum.*”

<sup>6</sup> “Et in casu si aliquis [defectus] in eorum *Magisterio* appareret, promiserunt refarcire.” *Hist. Casn.* tom. ii. p. 545, col. ii. Chart. ann. 1349.

<sup>7</sup> R. R. v. 4172.

And, in the same poem, in describing the shoes of Mirth,

And shode he was, with grete *maistrie*,  
With shone decopid and with lace.<sup>1</sup>

Maystrye occurs in the description of a lady's saddle, in *Syr Launfal*:

The fadelle was femyly sett,  
The sambus<sup>2</sup> wer grene felvet,  
I-painted with ymagerye;  
The bordure was of belles<sup>3</sup>  
Of ryche golde and nothynge elles  
That any man myȝte alpye.

<sup>1</sup> R. R. 842.

<sup>2</sup> I know not what ornament or implement of the antient horse-furniture is here intended, unlesis it is a saddle-cloth; nor can I find this word in any glossary. But *Sambue* occurs, evidently under the very same signification, in the beautiful French romance of *Garin*, written in the twelfth century.

“ Li palefrois sur coi la dame fist  
Estoit plus blanc que nule flor de lis;  
Le lorcins vaut mils sols parisis,  
Et la Saubue nul plus riche ne vist.”

“ The palfrey on which the lady sate, was whiter than any flower de lis: the bridle was worth a thousand Parisian sols, and a richer *Saubue* never was seen.” The French word, however, is properly written *Sambue*, and is not uncommon in old French wardrobe rolls, where it appears to be a *female* saddle-cloth, or *housing*. So in *Le Roman de la Rose*,

“ Comme royne fust vestue,  
Et chevauchast à grand Sambue.”

The Latin word, and in the same restrained sense, is sometimes *Sambua*, but most commonly *Sambuca*. Ordericus Vitalis, lib. viii. p. 694, edit. Par. 1619. “ Mannos et mulas cum Sambucis mulieribus prospexit.” Vincent of Beauvais says, that the Tartarian women, when they ride, have Cambucas of painted leather, embroidered with gold, hanging down on either side of the horse. *Specul. Hist.* x. 85. But Vincent's Cambucas was originally written *cambuchas*, or *Sambucas*. To such an enormity this article of the trappings of female horsemanship had arisen in the middle ages, that Frederick King of Sicily restrained it by a sumptuary law; which enjoined that no woman, even of the highest rank, should presume to use a Sambuca or saddle-cloth, in which were gold, silver, or pearls, &c. *Constitut.* cap. 92, Queen Olympias, in [the] *Gest of Alexander*, has a Sambue of silk, fol. 54.

“ A mule also whyte so mylke,  
With fadel of golde, sambue of sylke,” &c.

<sup>3</sup> Of this fashion I have already given many instances. The latest I remember is in the year 1503, at the marriage of the princess Margaret. “ In specyall the Erle of Northumberland ware on a goodly gowne of tynfill, fourred with hermynes. He was mounted upon a fayre courser, bys harness of goldsmith worke, and thorough that sam was fawen small belles, that maid a mellodious noyse.” Leland. *Coll. ad calc. tom. iii.* p. 276. In the *Nonnes Preestes Prologue*, Chaucer, from the circumstance of the Monk's bridle being decorated with bells, takes occasion to put an admirable stroke of humour and satire into the mouth of the Host, which at once ridicules that inconsistent piece of affection, and censures the monk for the dulness of his tale. Ver. 14796,—

“ Swiche talking is not worth a boterflie,  
For therin is ther no disport ne game:  
Therefore fire monke, dan Piers by your name,  
I pray you hertely tell us somewhat elles,  
For sikerly, n're clinking of your belles

In the arsoun<sup>1</sup> before and behynde  
Were twey stones of Ynde  
    Gay for the maystrye.  
The paytrelle<sup>2</sup> of her palfraye  
Was worth an erldome sturte and gay, &c.

“In the saddle-bow were two jewels of India, very beautiful to be seen, in consequence of the great art with which they were wrought.”<sup>3</sup> Chaucer calls his Monk :

fayre for the Maistrie,  
An outrider, that lovid venery.<sup>4</sup>

*Fayre for the Maistrie* means, skilled in the *Maistrie of the game*, *La Maistrie du Venerie*, or the science of hunting, then so much a favourite, as simply and familiarly to be called the *maistrie*. From many other instances, which I could produce, I will only add, that the search of the Philosopher’s stone is called in the Latin Geber *Investigatio Magisterii*.

CHAP. ciii. The merchant who sells three wise maxims to the wife of Domitian.

CHAP. civ. A knight in hunting meets a lion, from whose foot he extracts a thorn. Afterwards he becomes an outlaw, and being seized by the king, is condemned to be thrown into a deep pit to be devoured by a hungry lion. The lion fawns on the knight, whom he perceives to be the same that drew the thorn from his paw. Then said the king, “I will learn forbearance from the beasts. As the lion has spared your life, when it was in his power to take it, I therefore grant you a free pardon. Depart, and be admonished hence to live virtuously.”

The learned reader must immediately recollect a similar story of one Androclus who, being exposed to fight with wild beasts in the Roman amphitheatre, is recognized and unattacked by a most savage lion, whom he had formerly healed exactly in the same manner. But I believe the whole is nothing more than an oriental apologue on gratitude, written much earlier; and that it here exists in its original state. Androclus’s story is related by Aulus Gellius, on the authority of a Greek writer, one Appion, called Plistonices, who flourished under Tiberius. The character of Appion, with which Gellius prefaces this tale, in some measure invalidates his credit; notwithstanding he pretends to have been an eye witness of this extraordinary fact.<sup>5</sup> Had our compiler of the *Gesta* taken this

---

That on your bridel hange on every fide,  
By heven king that for us alle dide,  
I shoulde or this have fallen down for slepe,  
Although the slough had been never so depe.”

<sup>1</sup> saddle-bow.

<sup>2</sup> breast-plate.

<sup>3</sup> [Ed. 1845, p. 31.]

<sup>4</sup> *Prol.* v. 165.

<sup>5</sup> “Eius libri,” says Gellius, “non incelebres feruntur; quibus, omnium ferme quæ mirifica in Aegypto vifuntur audiunturque, historia comprehenditur. Sed in his quæ audivisse et legisse sese dicit, fortasse a vitio studioque ostentationis fit loquacior,” &c. *Noct. Attic.* lib. v. cap. xiv. See another fabulous story, of which Appion was an eye witness, *ibid.* l. vii. cap. viii. It is of a boy beloved by a dolphin.

story from Gellius, it is probable he would have told it with some of the same circumstances; especially as Gellius is a writer whom he frequently follows and even quotes, and to whom, on this occasion, he might have been obliged for a few more strokes of the marvellous. But the two writers agree only in the general subject. Our compiler's narrative has much more simplicity than that of Gellius, and contains marks of eastern manners and life. Let me add, that the oriental fabulists are fond of illustrating and enforcing the duty of gratitude, by feigning instances of the gratitude of beasts towards men. And of this the present compilation, which is strongly tinctured with orientalism, affords several other proofs.

CHAP. cv. Theodosius the blind emperor ordained, that the cause of every injured person should be heard on ringing a bell placed in a public part of his palace. A serpent had a nest near the spot where the bell-rope fell. In the absence of the serpent, a toad took possession of her nest. The serpent twisting herself round the rope, rang the bell for justice, and by the emperor's special command the toad was killed. A few days afterwards, as the king was reposing on his couch, the serpent entered the chamber, bearing a precious stone in her mouth. The serpent creeping up to the emperor's face, laid the precious stone on his eyes, and glided out of the apartment. Immediately the emperor was restored to his sight.

The circumstances of the bell of justice occurs in the real history of some eastern monarch, whose name I have forgotten.

In the Arabian philosophy serpents, either from the brightness of their eyes, or because they inhabit the cavities of the earth, were considered as having a natural or occult connection with precious stones. In Alphonſus's *Clericalis Disciplina*, a snake is mentioned, whose eyes were real jacinths. In Alexander's romantic history, he is said to have found serpents in the vale of Jordian, with collars of huge emeralds growing on their necks.<sup>1</sup> The toad, under a vulgar indiscriminating idea, is ranked with the reptile race: and Shakespeare has a beautiful comparison on the traditional notion, that the toad has a rich gem inclosed within its head. Milton gives his serpent eyes of carbuncle.<sup>2</sup>

CHAP. cvi. The three fellow-travellers, who have only one loaf of bread.

This apologue is in Alphonſus<sup>3</sup> [and in the *Fabliaux*].

CHAP. cvii. There was an image in the city of Rome, which stretched forth its right hand, on the middle finger of which was written, Strike here. For a long time none could understand the meaning of this mysterious inscription. At length a certain subtle clerk, who came to see this famous image, observed, as the sun shone against it, the shadow of the inscribed finger on the ground at some

<sup>1</sup> Vincent of Beauvais, *Specul. Hist.* lib. iv. c. 58, fol. 42, a.

<sup>2</sup> *Parad. L.* ix. 500.

<sup>3</sup> [The *Disciplina Clericalis* by Petrus Alphonſus, one of the most popular collections of Oriental fictions during the middle ages.]

distance. He immediately took a spade, and began to dig exactly on that spot. He came at length to a flight of steps which descended far under ground, and led him to a stately palace. Here he entered a hall, where he saw a king and queen sitting at table, with their nobles and a multitude of people, all clothed in rich garments. But no person spake a word. He looked towards one corner, where he saw a polished carbuncle, which illuminated the whole room.<sup>1</sup> In the opposite corner he perceived the figure of a man standing, having a bended bow with an arrow in his hand, as prepared to shoot. On his forehead was written, "I am, who am. Nothing can escape my stroke, not even yonder carbuncle which shines so bright." The clerk beheld all with amazement, and entering a chamber saw the most beautiful ladies working at the loom in purple.<sup>2</sup> But all

<sup>1</sup> See infr. vol. iii. So in the romance or *Lay of Syr Launfal*, MSS. Cotton. *Calig.* A. 2, fol. 35, a. [Printed by Mr. Halliwell in his *Illustrations of Fairy Mythology*, 1845.]

"And when they come in the forest an hys,  
A pavyloun y-teld he fyȝt.  
The pavyloun was wroth for sothe, y-wys,  
All of werk of Sarfynys,  
The pomelles<sup>3</sup> of crystalle."

On the top was [an eagle]<sup>4</sup>

"Of bournede gold, ryche and good,  
I-florysched with ryche amalle ;  
His cyn wer carbonkeles bryȝt,  
As the mone<sup>5</sup> they schon a nyȝt,  
That spreteth out ovyr alle :  
Alyfaundre the conquerour,  
Ne kyng Artour yn hys most honour  
Ne hadde noon swych juelle.  
He fond yn the pavyloun,  
The kynges douȝter of Olyroun,  
Dame Triamour that hyste,  
Her fadry was kyng of fayrye."

And in the alliterative romance, called the *Sege of Jerusalen*, MSS. Cott. *Calig.* A. 2, fol. 122, b.—

"Tytus tarriedde noȝte<sup>6</sup> for that, but to the tempul rode.  
That was rayled in the roofe with rubyes ryche,  
With perles and with perytotes<sup>7</sup> all the place fette,  
That glystered as coles in the fyre, on the golde ryche ;  
The dores with dyamondes dryven were thykke,  
And made also marveylously with margery (margarites) perles,  
That ever lemede the lyȝt, and as a lampe shewed :  
The clerkes had none other lyȝte."

[See *La Conquête de Jérusalem*, a 13th century romance of the *Knight of the Swan* or *Godfrey of Bulloigne* cycle, ed. Hippéau, 1860.—F.]

<sup>1</sup> The original is, "mulieres pulcherrimas in purpura et pallo operantes invit." fol. l. a, col. 1. This may mean either the sense in the text, or that the ladies were clothed in purpura et pallo, a phrase which I never saw before in

<sup>1</sup> Saracen-work.

<sup>2</sup> balls, pinnacles.

<sup>3</sup> [Sir F. Madden's correction.]

<sup>4</sup> enamel.

<sup>5</sup> moon.

<sup>6</sup> nought.

<sup>7</sup> On the finger of Becket, when he was killed, was a jewel called Peretot. *Monast. Angl.* i. 6.

was silence. He then entered a stable full of the most excellent horses and asses : he touched some of them, and they were instantly turned into stone. He next surveyed all the apartments of the palace, which abounded with all that his wishes could desire. He again visited the hall, and now began to reflect how he should return ; "but," says he, "my report of all these wonders will not be believed, unless I carry something back with me." He therefore took from the principal table a golden cup and a golden knife, and placed them in his bosom ; when the man, who stood in the corner with the bow, immediately shot at the carbuncle which he shattered into a thousand pieces. At that moment the hall became dark as night. In this darkness, not being able to find his way, he remained in the subterraneous palace, and soon died a miserable death.

In the moralisation of this story, the steps by which the Clerk descends into the earth are supposed to be the Passions. The palace, so richly stored, is the world with all its vanities and temptations. The figure with the bow bent is Death, and the carbuncle is Human Life. He suffers for his avarice in coveting and seizing what was not his own ; and no sooner has he taken the golden knife and cup, that is, enriched himself with the goods of this world, than he is delivered up to the gloom and horrors of the grave.

Spenser, in the *Faerie Queene*, seems to have distantly remembered this fable, where a fiend expecting Sir Guyon will be tempted to snatch some of the treasures of the subterraneous House of Richeſſe, which are displayed in his view, is prepared to fasten upon him :

Thereat the fiend his gnashing teeth did grate,  
And griev'd so long to lacke his greedie pray ;  
For well he weened that so glorious bayte  
Would tempt his guest to take thereof assay :  
Had he so doen, he had him snatcht away  
More light then Culver in the Faulcons fift.<sup>1</sup>

This story was originally invented of Pope Gerbert or Sylvester II., who died in the year 1003. He was eminently learned

---

barbarous latinity : but which tallies with the old English expression purple and pall. This is sometimes written purple pall. As in *Syr Launfal*, *st supr.* fol. 40, a.

"The lady was clad yn purpure palle."

Antiently *Pallium*, as did *Purpura*, signified in general any rich cloth. Thus there were saddles, de pallio et ebore ; a bed, de pallio ; a cope, de pallio, &c. &c. See *Dufresne, Lat. Gloss.* v. *Pallium*. And *Pellum*, its corruption. In old French, to cover a hall with tapestry was called *Paller*. So in *Syr Launfal*, *st supr.* fol. 40, a.

"Thyn halle agrayde, and hele the walles  
With clodes and wyt ryche palles,  
Ayens my Lady Tryamour."

Which also illustrates the former meaning. In [the] *Gest* of Alexander we have,

"Her bed was made forsothe  
With pallis and with riche clothe,  
The chambre was hangid with clothe of gold," fol. 57.

<sup>1</sup> B. ii. c. vii. ft. 34, [edit. Morris, p. 115.]

in the mathematical sciences, and on that account was styled a magician. William of Malmesbury is, I believe, the first writer now extant by whom it is recorded ; and he produces it partly to show that Gerbert was not always successful in those attempts which he so frequently practised to discover treasures hid in the earth by the application of the necromantic arts. I will translate Malmesbury's narration of this fable, as it varies in some of the circumstances, and has some heightenings of the fiction. "At Rome there was a brazen statue, extending the forefinger of the right hand, and on its forehead was written, *Strike here*. Being suspected to conceal a treasure, it had received many bruises from the credulous and ignorant in their endeavours to open it. At length Gerbert unriddled the mystery. At noonday, observing the reflection of the forefinger on the ground, he marked the spot. At night he came to the place, with a page carrying a lamp. There, by a magical operation, he opened a wide passage in the earth, through which they both descended, and came to a vast palace. The walls, the beams, and the whole structure, were of gold : they saw golden images of knights playing at chess, with a king and queen of gold at a banquet, with numerous attendants in gold, and cups of immense size and value. In a recess was a carbuncle, whose lustre illuminated the whole palace ; opposite to which stood a figure with a bended bow. As they attempted to touch some of the rich furniture, all the golden images seemed to rush upon them. Gerbert was too wise to attempt this a second time, but the page was bold enough to snatch from the table a golden knife of exquisite workmanship. At that moment all the golden images rose up with a dreadful noise ; the figure with the bow shot at the carbuncle, and a total darkness ensued. The page then replaced the knife, otherwise they both would have suffered a cruel death." Malmesbury afterwards mentions a brazen bridge, framed by the enchantments of Gerbert, beyond which were golden horses of a gigantic size, with riders of gold richly illuminated by the most serene meridian sun. A large company attempted to pass the bridge, with a design of stealing some pieces of the gold. Immediately the bridge rose from its foundations, and stood perpendicular on one end ; a brazen man appeared from beneath it, who struck the water with a mace of brass, and the sky was overspread with the most horrible gloom. Gerbert, like some other learned necromancers of the Gothic ages, was supposed to have fabricated a brazen head under the influence of certain planets, which answered questions. But I forbear to suggest any more hints for a future collection of Arabian tales. I shall only add Malmesbury's account of the education of Gerbert, which is a curious illustration of what has been often inculcated in these volumes concerning the introduction of romantic fiction into Europe.<sup>1</sup> "Gerbert, a native of France, went into Spain for the purpose of learning astrology and other sciences of that cast of the Saracens, who to this day occupy the

<sup>1</sup> See Diss. i.

upper regions of Spain. They are seated in the metropolis of Seville, where, according to the customary practice of their country, they study the arts of divination and enchantment. Here Gerbert soon exceeded Ptolemy in the astrolabe, Alchind in astronomy, and Julius Firmicus in fatality. Here he learned the meaning of the flight and language of birds, and was taught how to raise spectres from Hell. Here he acquired whatever human curiosity has discovered for the destruction or convenience of mankind. I say nothing of his knowledge in arithmetic, music, and geometry, which he so fully understood as to think them beneath his genius, and which he yet with great industry introduced into France, where they had been long forgotten. He certainly was the first who brought the algorithm from the Saracens, and who illustrated it with such rules as the most studious in that science cannot explain. He lodged with a philosopher of that sect,"<sup>1</sup> &c.

I conclude this chapter with a quotation from the old metrical romance of *Li beaux Disconus*, where the knight, in his attempt to disenchant the Lady of Sinadone, after entering the hall of the castle of the necromancers, is almost in similar circumstances with our subterraneous adventurers. The passage is rich in Gothic imageries, and [is] the most striking part of the poem which is mentioned by Chaucer as a popular romance :

Syr Lybeaus, knyght certeys,  
Rod ynto the palys,  
And at the halle alyghte:  
Trompes, schalmuses,<sup>2</sup>  
He seygh, be for the heygh deys,<sup>3</sup>  
Stonde in hys syghte.  
Amydde the halle flore  
A fere, stark and store,<sup>4</sup>  
Was lyght, and brende bryght.<sup>5</sup>  
Nere the dor he yede,<sup>6</sup>  
And ladde<sup>7</sup> yn hys stede  
That wont was helpe hym yn fyght.  
Lybeaus inner<sup>8</sup> gan pace  
To se ech a place,<sup>9</sup>  
The hales<sup>10</sup> yn the halle,  
Of mayne mor ne lasse  
Ne sawe he body ne face,<sup>11</sup>  
But menstrales yclodeth yn palle,<sup>12</sup> &c.

<sup>1</sup> *De Gest. Reg. Angl.* lib. ii. cap. 10, p. 36, a, b, 37, a, b, edit. 1596. Afterwards Malmesbury mentions his horologe, which was not of the nature of the modern clock, but which yet is recorded as a wonderful invention by his contemporary Ditzmar, *Chron.* lib. vi. fol. 83, edit. 1580. Vincent of Beauvais has transcribed all that William of Malmesbury has here said about Gerbert, *Specul. Histor.* lib. xxiv. c. 98, seq. f. 344, a. Compare Platina, *Vit. Pontif.* fol. 122, edit. 1485. See also *L'Histoire Litteraire de France* by the Benedictines, tom. vi. *ad. calc.*

<sup>2</sup> instruments of music.

<sup>3</sup> he saw at the high table.

<sup>4</sup> A fire, large and strong : *store* is *flour*.

<sup>5</sup> Lighted, and burned bright.

<sup>6</sup> *yede*, went into the door of the hall with his horse.

<sup>7</sup> led.

<sup>8</sup> to see, to view, every place or thing.

<sup>9</sup> perhaps, *holes*, i. e. corners.

<sup>10</sup> he saw no man.

<sup>11</sup> clothed in rich attire.

So moche melodye  
 Was never wythinne walle.  
 Before ech menstrale stod  
 A torche fayre<sup>1</sup> and good,  
 Brennyng fayre and bryght.  
 Inner more he yode,  
 To wyte, wyth eger mode  
 Ho scholde<sup>2</sup> wyth hym fyght :  
 He yede ynto the corneres,  
 And lokede on the pylers,  
 That felcouth wer of fyght,  
 Of jasper and of fyn crystall, &c.  
 The thores wer of bras ;  
 The wyndowes wer of glas  
 Florysleth with imagerye :<sup>3</sup>  
 The halle ypaynted was,  
 No rychere, never ther nas  
 That he hadde seye wyth eye.<sup>4</sup>  
 He sette hym an that deys,<sup>5</sup>  
 The menstrales wer yn pes,<sup>6</sup>  
 That were so good and trye.<sup>8</sup>  
 The torches that brende bryght<sup>9</sup>  
 Quenchede anon ryght ;<sup>10</sup>  
 The menstrales wer aweye :<sup>11</sup>  
 Dores and wyndowes alle  
 Beten yn the halle  
 As hyt wer voys of thunder, &c.—  
 As he sat thus dyfmayde,  
 And held hymself betrayde,  
 Stedes herde he naye, &c.<sup>12</sup>

This castle is called “A paleys queynt of gynne,” and, “by negremancye ymaketh of fayrye.”<sup>13</sup>

CHAP. cviii. The mutual fidelity of two thieves.

CHAP. cix. The chest and the three pasties.

A like story is in Boccaccio’s *Decameron*,<sup>14</sup> in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*,<sup>15</sup> and in Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*.<sup>16</sup>

The story, however, as it stands in Gower, seems to be copied from one which is told by the hermit Barlaam to King Avenamore, in the spiritual romance, written originally in Greek about the year 800, by Joannes Damascenus a Greek monk,<sup>17</sup> and translated into Latin before the thirteenth century, entitled *Barlaam and Josaphat*. But Gower’s immediate author, if not Boccaccio, was perhaps Vincent of Beauvais, who wrote about the year [1250], and who

<sup>1</sup> a torch fair and good.

<sup>2</sup> to know, in angry mood what knight would, &c.

<sup>3</sup> painted glas.

<sup>4</sup> the walls were painted with histories.

<sup>5</sup> had seen.

<sup>6</sup> he sate down in the principal seat.

<sup>7</sup> were suddenly silent.

<sup>8</sup> tried, excellent. Chaucer, *Rim. Sir Thop.* v. 3361.

“With finger that is *trie*.”

<sup>9</sup> burned so bright.

<sup>10</sup> were instantly quenched, or extinguished.

<sup>11</sup> vanished away.

<sup>12</sup> MSS. Cotton. Calig. A 2, fol. 52, b, *seq.* [Printed by Ritson (*Romances*, ii.

<sup>75-6.</sup> An edition of the original French has been given by M. Hippéau, 1860, 8vo.]

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* f. 52, b.

<sup>14</sup> x. l.

<sup>15</sup> Nov. lxv.

<sup>16</sup> Lib. v. fol. 96, a.

<sup>17</sup> See Joan. Damasceni *Opera nonnull. Histor. ad. calc. pag. 12.* Basil. 1548, fol. The chefts are here called *Arcelle*.

has incorporated Damascenus's history of Barlaam and Josaphat,<sup>1</sup> who were canonised, into his *Speculum Historiale*.<sup>2</sup> As Barlaam's fable is probably the remote but original source of Shakespeare's Caskets in the *Merchant of Venice*, I will give the reader a translation of the passage in which it occurs from the Greek original, never yet printed: "The king commanded four chests to be made: two of which were covered with gold, and secured by golden locks, but filled with the rotten bones of human carcases. The other two were overlaid with pitch, and bound with rough cords; but replenished with precious stones and the most exquisite gems, and with ointments of the richest odour. He called his nobles together; and placing these chests before them, asked which they thought the most valuable. They pronounced those with the golden coverings to be the most precious, supposing they were made to contain the crowns and girdles of the king.<sup>3</sup> The two chests covered with pitch they viewed with contempt. Then said the king: I presumed what would be your determination; for ye look with the eyes of sense. But to discern baseness or value, which are hid within, we must look with the eyes of the mind. He then ordered the golden chests to be opened, which exhaled an intolerable stench, and filled the beholders with horror."<sup>4</sup> In the *Metrical Lives of the Saints*, written about the year 1300, these chests are called *four fates*, that is, four *vats* or vessels.<sup>5</sup>

I make no apology for giving the reader a translation from the same Greek original, which is now before me, of the story of the Boy told in the *Decameron*. "A king had an only son. As soon as he was born, the physicians declared, that if he was allowed to see the sun or any fire, before he arrived at the age of twelve years, he would be blind. The king commanded an apartment to be hewed within a rock, into which no light could enter; and here he shut up the boy, totally in the dark, yet with proper attendants, for twelve years. At the end of which time, he brought him abroad from his gloomy chamber, and placed in his view men, women, gold, precious stones, rich garments, chariots of exquisite workmanship drawn by horses with golden bridles, heaps of purple tapestry, armed knights on horseback, oxen and sheep. These were all distinctly pointed out to the youth: but being most pleased with the women, he desired to know by what name they were called. An esquire of the king jocosely told him that they were devils who catch men. Being brought to the king, he was asked which he liked best of all the fine

<sup>1</sup> It is extant in Surius, and other collections.

<sup>2</sup> *De Rege Aemur*, &c. lib. xv. f. 196, 1591. It contains sixty-four chapters.

<sup>3</sup> In Dr. Johnson's abridgement of a tale like this from Boccaccio, which he supposes to have been Shakespeare's original, the king says, that in one of the caskets was "contained his crown, sceptre and jewels," &c. See Steevens's *Shakespeare*, vol. iii. p. 255, edit. 1779, [and Dyce's second edit. 1868, vol. ii. pp. 342-3].

<sup>4</sup> MSS. Laud. C. 72, Bibl. Bodl. Compare Caxton's *Golden Legende*, fol. ccclxxxxiii. b. And Surius, *Vit. Sandor*. 1618, Nov. 27. Ann. 383, p. 560.

<sup>5</sup> MSS. Bodl. 779, f. 292, b.

things he had seen. He replied, 'The devils who catch men,' " &c. I need not enlarge on Boccacio's improvements.<sup>1</sup>

This romantic legend of Barlaam and Josophat, which is a history of considerable length, is undoubtedly the composition of one who had an intercourse with the East: and from the strong traces which it contains of the oriental mode of moralising, appears plainly to have been written, if not by the monk whose name it bears, at least by some devout and learned ascetic of the Greek church, and probably before the tenth century.

Leland mentions *Damascenus de Gestis Barlaam et Josophat*, as one of the manuscripts which he saw in Netley Abbey near Southampton.<sup>2</sup>

CHAP. cx. The life of the knight Placidus, or Placidas,<sup>3</sup> afterwards called Eustacius.

It occurs in Caxton's [edition of the] *Golden Legende*.<sup>4</sup> Among the Cotton manuscripts there is a metrical legend or romance on this story.<sup>5</sup>

CHAP. cxii. The claffical story of Argus and Mercury, with some romantic additions. Mercury comes to Argus in the character of a minstrel, and lulls him to sleep by telling him tales and singing:—“ *incipit more histrionicō fabulas dicere, et plerumque cantare.*”

CHAP. cxiii. The son of King Gorgonius is beloved by his step-mother. He is therefore sent to seek his fortune in a foreign country, where he studies physic; and returning, heals his father of a dangerous disease, who recovers at the sight of him. The step-mother, hearing of his return, falls sick, and dies at seeing him.

CHAP. cxiii. The tournaments of the rich King Adonias. A party of knights arrive the first day, who lay their shields aside in one place. The same number arrives the second day, each of whom chooses his antagonist by touching with his spear the shield of one of the first day's party, not knowing the owner.

The most curious anecdote of chivalry, now on record, occurs in the ecclesiastical history of Spain. Alphonsus IX., about the year 1214, having expelled the Moors from Toledo, endeavoured to establish the Roman missal in the place of Saint Isidore's. This alarming innovation was obstinately opposed by the people of Toledo; and the king found that his project would be attended with almost insuperable difficulties. The contest at length between the two missals grew so serious, that it was mutually resolved to decide the

<sup>1</sup> This fable occurs in an old collection of *Apologues* above cited, MSS. Harl. 463, fol. 2, a. [Wright's *Latin Stories*, p. 7: *De filio regis qui nunquam viderat mulieres.*]

<sup>2</sup> *Collectan.* tom. iii. p. 149, edit. 1770.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Placidas is the name of a knight in the *Faerie Queene*. [The tale has been verified by John Partridge, 1566, 8vo.]

<sup>4</sup> Fol. ccxxiii. b. And *Metric. Lives S.* MSS. Bodl. 779, f. 164, a.

<sup>5</sup> *Calig. A. 2*, fol. 135, b. This is a translation from the French. MSS. Reg. Paris, Cod. 3031.

controversy, not by a theological disputation, but by single combat ; in which the champion of the Toletan missal proved victorious.<sup>1</sup>

Many entertaining passages relating to trials by single combat may be seen in the old Imperial and Lombard laws. In [Christine of Pise's] *Boke of the Fayttes of Armes and of Chivalrye*, 1489, translated from the French [by Caxton], many of the chapters towards the end are compiled from that singular monument of Gothic legislation.

CHAP. cxv. An intractable elephant is lulled asleep in a forest by the songs and blandishments of two naked virgins. One of them cuts off his head, the other carries a bowl of his blood to the king. “*Rex vero gavisus est valde, et statim fecit fieri purpuram, et multa alia, de eodem sanguine.*”

In this wild tale, there are circumstances enough of general analogy, if not of peculiar parallelism, to recall to my memory the following beautiful description, in the romance of *Syr Launfal*, of two damsels whom the knight unexpectedly meets in a desolate forest :

As he sat yn sorow and sore,  
He fawe come out of holtes hore  
Gentylle maydenes two ;  
Her kerteles wer of Inde sandel<sup>2</sup> ;  
I-lased<sup>3</sup> smalle, jolyf and welle ;  
Then my<sup>4</sup> noon gayer go.  
Har manteles wer of grene felwet<sup>5</sup> ;  
Y-bordured with gold ry<sup>6</sup>t well y-sette,  
I-pelvred<sup>6</sup> with gris and gro<sup>7</sup> ;  
Har heddy<sup>8</sup> wer dy<sup>9</sup>t welle withalle,  
Everych hadde oon a jolyf coronalle,  
Wyth fyfty gemmys and mo.<sup>10</sup>  
Har faces wer whyt as snow on downe,  
Har rode<sup>11</sup> was red, her eyn wer browne,  
I fawe never non swyche.<sup>11</sup>  
That oon bar of gold a basyn,  
That other a towayle whyt and fyn,  
Of selk that was good and ryche.  
Har kercheves were well schyre<sup>12</sup>  
Arayd wyth ryche gold wyre, &c.<sup>13</sup>

CHAP. cxvi. The queen of Pepin king of France died in child-bed, leaving a son. He married a second wife, who bore a son within a year. These children were sent abroad to be nursed. The surviving queen, anxious to see her child, desired that both the boys might be brought home. They were so exceedingly alike, that the one could not be distinguished from the other, except by the king. The mother begged the king to point out her own son. This he refused to do till they were both grown up ; lest she should spoil

<sup>1</sup> See the *Mozarabes*, or *Missal of Saint Isidore*, printed at Toledo by the command of Cardinal Ximenes, 1500, [and again in 1502,] fol.

<sup>2</sup> Indian silk. *Cendal*. Fr. See Dufresne, *Lat. Gl. V. CENDALUM*.

<sup>3</sup> laced. <sup>4</sup> there might. <sup>5</sup> velvet. <sup>6</sup> furred, *pelura*, *pellis*.

<sup>7</sup> *gris* is fur, *gris* and *gray* are common in the metrical romances.

<sup>8</sup> their heads. <sup>9</sup> more. <sup>10</sup> ruddiness. <sup>11</sup> such.

<sup>12</sup> cut. <sup>13</sup> MSS. Cotton. *Calig. A. 2*, fol. 35, a. [Ed. 1845, pp. 9-10.]

him by too fond a partiality. Thus they were both properly treated with uniform affection, and without excels of indulgence.

A favourite old romance is founded on the indistinctible likeness of two of Charlemagne's knights, Amys and Amel[ou]n, originally celebrated by Turpin, and placed by Vincent of Beauvais under the reign of Pepin.<sup>1</sup> [The ballad-romance of *Alexander and Lodwick* is founded on the same story ;] and there was an old drama upon the subject.

CHAP. cxvii. The law of the Emperor Frederick, that whoever rescued a virgin from a rape might claim her for his wife.

CHAP. cxviii. A knight, being in Egypt, recovers a thousand talents, which he had entrusted to a faithless friend, by the artifice of an old woman.

This tale is in *Alphonsus*. And in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*.<sup>2</sup>

CHAP. cxix. A king had an oppressive Seneschal who, passing through a forest, fell into a deep pit, in which were a lion, an ape, and a serpent. A poor man who gathered sticks in the forest, hearing his cries, drew him up ; together with the lion, the ape, and the serpent. The Seneschal returned home, promising to reward the poor man with great riches. Soon afterwards the poor man went to the palace to claim the promised reward ; but was ordered to be cruelly beaten by the Seneschal. In the mean time, the lion drove ten asses laden with gold to the poor man's cottage : the serpent brought him a precious stone of three colours : and the ape, when he came to the forest on his daily business, laid him heaps of wood. The poor man, in consequence of the virtues of the serpent's precious stone, which he sold, arrived to the dignity of knighthood, and acquired ample possessions. But afterwards he found the precious stone in his chest, which he presented to the king. The king having heard the whole story, ordered the Seneschal to be put to death for his ingratitude, and preferred the poor man to his office.

This story occurs in Symeon Seth's translation of the celebrated Arabian fable-book called *Calilah u Dumannah*<sup>3</sup> [or the *Fables of Bilpay*]. It is recited by Matthew Paris, under the year 1195, as a parable which King Richard the First, after his return from the east, was often accustomed to repeat, by way of reproving those ungrateful princes who refused to engage in the crusade.<sup>4</sup> It is versified by Gower, who omits the lion, as Matthew Paris does the ape, in the fifth book of the *Confessio Amantis*.<sup>5</sup> He thus describes the services of the ape and serpent to the poor man, who gained his livelihood by gathering sticks in a forest :

<sup>1</sup> *Specul. Hist.* xxiii. c. 162, f. 329, b.

<sup>2</sup> *Nov. lxxiv.*

<sup>3</sup> P. 444. This work was translated into English under the title of [The Morall Philosophie of Doni: drawne out of the auncient writers. A worke first compiled in the Indian tongue, and afterwardes reduced into diuers other languages : and now lately Englished out of Italian by Tho. North, brother to the right Hon. Sir Roger North, Knight, Lorde North of Kyrtheling. Lond. 1570, 4to.], with wood-cuts. But Doni was the Italian translator.

<sup>4</sup> *Hist. Maj.* p. 179. Edit. Wats.

<sup>5</sup> fol. 110, b.

He gan his ape anone behold,  
Which had gadred al aboute,  
Of stickes here and there a route,  
And leyde hem redy to his honde,  
Whereof he made his trusse and bond  
From daie to daie.

Upon a time and as he drough  
Towarde the woodde, he sigh beside  
The great gasty serpent glide,  
Till that she came in his presence,  
And in hir kynde a reverence  
She hath hym do, and forthwith all  
A stome more bright than a christall  
Out of hir mouth to fore his waye  
She lett down fall—

In Gower also, as often as the poor man fells the precious stome, on returning home, he finds it again among the money in his purse.

The acquisition of riches and the multiplication of treasure by invisible agency is a frequent and favourite fiction of the Arabian romance. Thus, among the presents given to Sir Launfal by the Lady Triamore, daughter of the king of Faerie,

I will the *ȝeve*<sup>1</sup> an alner.<sup>2</sup>  
I-mad of fylk and of gold cler,  
Wyth fayre ymages thre :  
As oft thou puttest the honde therinne,  
A mark of gold thou schalt wynne,<sup>3</sup>  
In wat place that thou be.<sup>4</sup>

CHAP. CXX. King Darius's legacy to his three sons. To the eldest he bequeaths all his paternal inheritance: to the second, all that he had acquired by conquest: and to the third, a ring and necklace, both of gold, and a rich cloth. All the three last gifts were endued with magical virtues. Whoever wore the ring on his finger, gained the love or favour of all whom he desired to please. Whoever hung the necklace over his breast, obtained all his heart could desire. Whoever sate down on the cloth, could be instantly transported to any part of the world which he chose.

From this beautiful tale, of which the opening only is here given, Occleve, commonly called Chaucer's disciple, framed a poem in the octave stanza, which was printed in 1614 [with certain alterations] by William Browne, in his set of Eclogues called the *Shepheards Pipe*. Occleve, [however, as Douce was the first to point out, has followed, not the Latin, but the English, *Gesta*.]<sup>5</sup> He has given no sort of embellishment to his original, and by no means deserves the praises which Browne in the following elegant pastoral lyrics has bestowed on his performance, and which more justly belong to the genuine Gothic inventor :

<sup>1</sup> give thee.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps *Almer*, or *Almere*, a cabinet or chest. [purse.]

<sup>3</sup> get, find.

<sup>4</sup> MSS. Cott. *Calig.* A. 2, fol. 35, b. [Ed. 1845, p. 12.]

<sup>5</sup> Viz. MSS. *Seld.* Sup. 53. Where is a prologue of many stanzas not printed by Browne. See also MSS. *Digb.* 185. MSS. *Laud.* K. 78. [See *infra*. vol. ii. sect. xx.]

Well I wot, the man that first  
 Sung this Lay, did quench his thirst  
 Deeply as did euer one,  
 In the Muses Helicon,  
 Many times he hath been seen  
 With the Fairies on the greene,  
 And to them his Pipe did sound,  
 Whilst they danced in a round ;  
 Mickle solace would they make him,  
 And at mid-night often wake him,  
 And convey him from his roome  
 To a field of yellow broome,  
 Or into the Medowes, where  
 Mints perfume the gentle Aire,  
 And where Flora spends her treasure,  
 There they would begin their measure.  
 If it chanc'd nights fable shrowds  
 Muffled Cynthia vp in clouds,  
 Safely home they then would see him,  
 And from brakes and quagmiers free him.  
 There are few such swaines as he  
 Now a dayes for harmony.<sup>1</sup>

The history of Darius, who gave this legacy to his three sons, is incorporated with that of Alexander, which has been decorated with innumerable fictions by the Arabian writers. There is also a separate romance on Darius and on Philip of Macedon.<sup>2</sup>

CHAP. cxxiv. Of the knights who intercede for their friend with a king, by coming to his court, each half on horseback and half on foot.

This is the last novel in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*.

CHAP. cxxvi. Macrobius is cited for the address and humour of an ingenious boy named Papirius.

This is one of the most lively stories in Macrobius.<sup>3</sup> [It is also in the *Notæ Attice*, and has been transferred to *Tales and quicke answeres*, ed. Berthelet, No. 21.]

CHAP. cxxviii. The forged testament of the wicked knight, under the reign of Maximian.

CHAP. cxxix. A young prince is sent on his travels. His three friends.

CHAP. cxxxii. The four physicians.

CHAP. cxxxiii. The king and his two greyhounds.

CHAP. cxxxiv. A story from Seneca.

CHAP. cxxxv. The story of Lucretia, from Saint Austin's *City of God*.

A more classical authority for this story, had it been at hand, would have been slighted for Saint Austin's *City of God*, which was the favourite spiritual romance ; and which, as the transition from religion to gallantry was anciently very easy, gave rise to the famous

<sup>1</sup> *Egl.* i. [edit. 1614. A copy of the original tale by Occleve is in MS. Reg. 17 D. vi. fol. 115 verso. See Browne's *Works*, edit. Hazlitt, ii. 178, *et seqq.*]

<sup>2</sup> Bibl. Reg. Paris. MSS. Cod. 3031.

<sup>3</sup> *Saturnal*, edit. 1694, lib. i. c. 6, p. 147.

old French romance called the [Book of the] *City of Ladies* [by Christine de Pise.]

CHAP. cxxxvii. The Roman emperor who is banished for his impartial distribution of justice. From the *Cronica of Eusebius*.

CHAP. cxxxviii. King Medro.

CHAP. cxxxix. King Alexander, by means of a mirror, kills a cockatrice, whose look had destroyed the greatest part of his army.

Aelian, in his *Various History*, mentions a serpent which appearing from the mouth of a cavern, stopped the march of Alexander's army through a spacious desert. The wild beasts, serpents, and birds, which Alexander encountered in marching through India, were most extravagantly imagined by the oriental fabulists, and form the chief wonders of that monarch's romance.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP. cxl. The Emperor Eraclius reconciles two knights.

This story is told by Seneca of Cneius Piso.<sup>2</sup> It occurs in Chaucer's *Sompnour's Tale*, as taken from Senec or Seneca.<sup>3</sup>

CHAP. cxli. A knight who had dissipated all his substance in frequenting tournaments, under the reign of Fulgentius, is reduced to extreme poverty. A serpent haunted a chamber of his house who, being constantly fed with milk by the knight, in return made his benefactor rich. The knight's ingratitude and imprudence in killing the serpent, who was supposed to guard a treasure concealed in his chamber.

Medea's dragon guarding the golden fleece is founded on the oriental idea of treasure being guarded by serpents. We are told in Vincent of Beauvais, that there are mountains of solid gold in India guarded by dragons and griffins.<sup>4</sup>

CHAP. cxlii. A certain king ordained a law, that if any man was suddenly to be put to death, at fun-rising a trumpet should be sounded before his gate. The king made a great feast for all his nobles, at which the most skilful musicians were present.<sup>5</sup> But, amidst the

<sup>1</sup> In Vincent of Beauvais, there is a long fabulous History of Alexander, transcribed partly from Simeon Seth. *Spec. Hist.* lib. iv. c. i. f. 41, a. seq. edit. 1591.

<sup>2</sup> *De Ira*, lib. i. c. 8. <sup>3</sup> Ver. 7600.

<sup>4</sup> *Specul. Hist.* lib. i. c. 64, fol. 9, b.

<sup>5</sup> In the days of chivalry, a concert of a variety of instruments of music constantly made a part of the solemnity of a splendid feast. Of this many instances have been given. I will here add another from the metrical romance of Emare. MSS. Cott. Calig. A. 2, fol. 71, a. [Printed by Ritson (*Romances*, ii. p. 220).]

“Syr Kadore lette make a feste,  
That was fayr and honeste,  
Wyth hys lordes the kyng :  
Ther was myche menstralfe,  
Trompus, tabors, and fawtre,  
Bothe harpe and fyddylling :  
The lady was gentilly and small,  
In kurtull alone served yn hall  
Byfore that nobull kyng :  
The cloth upon her shone so brygth,  
When she was theryn ydygth,  
She seemed non erly thynge,” &c.

And in Chaucer, *Jan. and May*, v. 1234:—

“Att ererie cours came the loud minstralfe.”

general festivity, the king was sad and silent. All the guests were surprised and perplexed at the king's melancholy; but at length his brother ventured to ask him the cause. The king replied, "Go home, and you shall hear my answer to-morrow." The king ordered his trumpeters to sound early the next morning before his brother's gate, and to bring him with them to judgment. The brother, on hearing this unexpected dreadful summons, was seized with horror, and came before the king in a black robe. The king commanded a deep pit to be made, and a chair composed of the most frail materials, and supported by four slight legs, to be placed inclining over the edge of the pit. In this the brother, being stripped naked, was seated. Over his head a sharp sword was hung by a small thread of silk. Around him four men were stationed with swords exceedingly sharp, who were to wait for the king's word, and then to kill him. In the mean time, a table covered with the most costly dishes was spread before him, accompanied with all sorts of music. Then said the king, "My brother, why are you so sad? Can you be dejected, in the midst of this delicious music, and with all these choice dainties?" He answered, "How can I be glad, when I have this morning heard the trumpet of death at my doors, and while I am seated in this tottering chair? If I make the smallest motion, it will break, and I shall fall into the pit, from which I shall never arise again. If I lift my head, the suspended sword will penetrate my brain; while these four tormentors only wait your command to put me to death." The king replied, "Now I will answer your question, why I was sad yesterday. I am exactly in your situation. I am seated, like you, in a frail and perishable chair, ready to tumble to pieces every moment, and to throw me into the infernal pit. Divine judgment, like this sharp sword, hangs over my head: and I am surrounded, like you, with four executioners. That before me is Death, whose coming I cannot tell; that behind me, my Sins, which are prepared to accuse me before the tribunal of God; that on the right, the Devil, who is ever watching for his prey; and that on the left, the Worm, who is now hungering after my flesh. Go in peace, my dearest brother: and never ask me again why I am sad at a feast."

Gower, in the *Confessio Amantis*, may perhaps have copied the circumstance of the morning trumpet from this apologue. His king is a king of Hungary:—

It fell so, that in thilke dawe  
 There was ordeigned by the lawe  
 A trompe with a sterne breth,  
 Which was cleped the trompe of deth:  
 And in the court where the king was,  
 A certein man this trompe of brafs  
 Hath in kepyng and therof serveth,  
 That whan a lord his deth deserveth,  
 He shall this dredfull trompe blowe  
 To-forc his gate to make it knowe,  
 Howe that the iugement is yive  
 Of deth, whiche shall nought be foryive.  
 The king whan it was night anone,  
 This man assent, and bad him gone,

To trompen at his brothers gate ;  
 And he, whiche mot so done algate,  
 Goth forth, and doth the kinges hefte.  
 This lord which herde of this tempeſt  
 That he to-fore his gate blewe,  
 Tho wift he by the lawe and knewe  
 That he was ſekerlich clede,<sup>1</sup> &c.

But Gower has connected with this circumstance a different story, and of an inferior cast both in point of moral and imagination. The truth is, Gower seems to have altogether followed this story as it appeared in the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent of Beauvais,<sup>2</sup> who took it from Damascenus's romance of *Barlaam and Jofapbat*.<sup>3</sup> Part of it is thus told in Caxton's translation of that legend.<sup>4</sup> "And the kynge hadde ſuche a custome, that whan one ſholde be delyvered to deth, the kynge ſholde ſende hys cryar with hys trompe that was ordeyned thereto. And on the euen he ſente the cryar wyth the trompe tofore hys brothers gate, and made to ſoune the trompe. And whan the kynges brother herde this, he was in despayr of ſauyng of his lyf, and coude not ſlepe of alle the nyght, and made his teſtament. And on the morne erly, he cladde hym in blacke : and came with wepyng with hys wyf and chyldren to the kynges paleys. And the kynge made hym to com tofore hym, and ſayd to hym, A fooll that thou art, that thou haſt herde the messenger of thy brother, to whom thou knowest well thou haſt not trespaced and doubtēſt ſo mooche, howe oughte not I then ne doubtē the messengeres of our lorde, agaynſte whom I haue ſoo ofte ſynned, which ſignefyed unto me more clerely the deth then the trompe ?"

CHAP. cxlv. The philosopher Socrates shows the caufe of the inſalubrity of a paſſage between two mountains in Armenia, by means of a poſhified mirror of ſteel. Albertus is cited, an abbot of Stade, and the author of a *Chronicle from Adam to 1256*.

CHAP. cxlvi. Saint Austin's *City of God* is quoted for an anſwer of Diomedes the pirate to king Alexander.

CHAP. cxlviii. Aulus Gellius is cited.

Aulus Gellius is here quoted for the ſtory of Arion<sup>5</sup> throwing himſelf into the ſea, and carried on the back of a dolphin to King Periander at Corinth.<sup>6</sup> Gellius relates this ſtory from Herodotus, in whom it is now extant.<sup>7</sup>

CHAP. cliii. The hiſtory of Apollonius of Tyre.

This ſtory, the longeſt in the book before us, and the ground-work of a favourite old romance, is known to have exiſted before the year 1190. [There is a Swedish translation, printed in 1471, and an imperfect Anglo-Saxon verſion, edited ſome years ago by the late Mr. Thorpe.]<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [C. A. ed. 1857, i. 113.]

<sup>2</sup> *Ubi ſupr.* p. ccxxiii.

<sup>3</sup> *Opp. ut ſupr.* p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> See Caxton's [edit. of the] *Golden Legend*, fol. ccclxxxiii. b. See also *Metrical Lives of the Saints*, MSS. Bodl. 779, f. 292, a.

<sup>5</sup> It is printed Amon.

<sup>6</sup> *Noſz. Attic.* lib. xvi. cap. xix.

<sup>7</sup> Lib. viii.

<sup>8</sup> A Greco-barbarous translation of the romance of *Apollonius of Tyre* was

In the Prologue to the English romance on this subject, called *Kynge Apolyn of Thye*, printed in 1510, we are told: "My wortshypfull mayster Wynkyn de Worde, havyng a lytell boke of an auncyent hystory of a kynge somtyme reyngnyne in the countree of Thye called Appolyn, concernynge his malfortunes and peryllous adventures right espouventables, bryefly compyled and pyteous for to here; the which boke, I Robert Coplande have me applyed for to translate out of the Frenſhe language into our maternal Englyſhe tongue, at the exhortacyon of my forſayd mayſter, accordyngē dyreſtly to myne auctor: gladly followynge the trace of my mayſter Caxton, begynnyng with ſmall ſtoryes and pamphletes and ſo to other." The English romance, or the French which is the ſame thing, exactly correfpounds in many paſſages with the text of the *Gesta*. I will iſtance in the following one only, in which the complication of the fable commences. King Appolyn dines in diſguife in the hall of King Antiochus.—"Came in the kynges daughter, accompanied with many ladyes and damoyſelles, whose ſplendente beaute were too long to endyte, for her roſacyate coloure was medled with grete favour. She dranke unto hir fader, and to all the lordes, and to all them that had ben at the play of the Shelde.<sup>1</sup> And as ſhe behelde here and there, ſhe eſpyed kynge Appolyn, and then ſhe ſayd unto her fader, Syr, what is he that ſytteſt fo hye as by you, it ſemeth by hym that he is angry or ſorrowfull? The kyng ſayd, I never ſawe fo nimble and pleauant a player at the ſhelde, and therfore have I made hym to come and ſoupe with my knyghtes. And

made by one Gabriel Contianus,<sup>1</sup> a Grecian, about the year 1500, as appears by a manuscript in the imperial library at Vienna;<sup>2</sup> and printed at Venice in 1503. Salviati, in his *Avvertimenti*, mentions an Italian romance on this ſubject, which he ſuppoſes to have been written about the year 1330. Lib. ii. c. 12. Veller firſt published this romance in Latin at Augiſburgh, in 1595, 4to. The ſtory is here much more elegantly told than in the *Gesta Romanorum*. In Godfrey of Viterbo's *Pantheon*, it is in Leonine verſe. There has been even a German translation of this favourite tale, viz., *Historia Apollonii Tyriæ et Sidone regis ex Latino ſermone in Germanicum tranſlata*. Auguſt. Vindel. 1471, fol. At the end is a German colophon, importing much the ſame.

<sup>1</sup> The tourney. To tourney is often called ſimply to *play*. As thus in *Syr Launſal*, MSS. Cott. Calig. A 2, fol. 37. [Halliwell's ed. 1851].

"Him thoſte he brente bryghte  
But he myghte with Launſal pleye  
In the feld betwene ham tweye  
To juſty, other to fyſte."

And in many other places.

<sup>1</sup> Γαβριὴλ Κοντιανὸς. Perhaps Κονταναῖος.

<sup>2</sup> Lambecc. *Catal. Bibl. Caesar.* Neſſelii *Suppl.* tom. i. p. 341, MSS. Græc. ccxlii. (Vind. et Norinb. 1690, fol.) Pr. "Μαρκός τὸν Ιωνὸν χριστόν." Fin. "Πόλυμα ἡ δευτεροβάθμια Κοντιανόν." &c. This is in proſe. But under this clas of the imperial library, Neſſelius recites many manuscript poems in the Greco-barbarous metre of the fifteenſt century or thereabouts, viz., *The Loves of Hemperius*; *Description of the city of Venice*; *The Romance of Florius and Patzflora*; *The Blindneſs and Beggary of Belisarius*; *The Trojan War*; *Of Hell*; *Of an Earthquake in the Iſle of Crete*, &c. These were all written at the reſto ration of learning in Italy.

Yf ye wyll knowe what he is, demaunde hym ; for peradventure he wyll tell you sooner than me. Methynke that he is departed from some good place, and I thinke in my mynde that somethynge is befallen hym for which he is sorry. This sayd, the noble dameysell wente unto Appolyn and said, Fayre Syr, graunt me a boone. And he graunted her with goode herte. And she sayd unto hym, Albeyt that your vylage be tryst and hevy, your behavour sheweth noblesse and facundyte, and therefore I pray you to tell me of your affayre and estate. Appolyn answered, Yf ye demaunde of my rychesses, I have lost them in the sea. The damoysell sayd, I pray you that you tell me of your adventures.<sup>1</sup> But in the *Gesta*, the princeis at entering the royal hall kisses all the knights and lords present, except the stranger.<sup>2</sup> Vossius says, that about the year 1520, one Alamanus Rinucinus, a Florentine, translated into Latin this fabulous history ; and that the translation was corrected by Beroaldus. Vossius certainly cannot mean that he translated it from the Greek original.<sup>3</sup> [Who was the author of the French version used by Copland we are without information ; but it is more than probable that the foundation of it was the narrative in the *Gesta Romanorum* . . . to which Belleforest was also to a certain extent indebted in his *Histoires Tragiques*, the publication of which was commenced in 1564. Belleforest, however, claims to have gone to a distinct source, a manuscript having fallen in his way, which purported to be *tiré du Grec* : in fact, it seems to have had its origin in that language, from which it was translated into French, Spanish, Italian, and English. These different versions are enumerated by Mr. Douce in his *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, but the Anglo-Saxon translation printed under the care of Mr. Thorpe does not seem to have fallen in his way.]<sup>4</sup>

CHAP. cliv. A story from Gervase of Tilbury, an Englishman who wrote about the year 1200, concerning a miraculous statue of Christ in the city of Edesfa.

CHAP. clv. The adventures of an English knight named Albert in a subterraneous passage, within the bishopric of Ely.

This story is said to have been told in the winter after supper, in a castle, “cum familia divitis ad focum, ut Potentibus moris est, recensendis antiquis Gestis operam daret,”—when the family of a rich man, as is the custom of the Great, was sitting round the fire, and telling “antient Gestis.” Here is a trait of the private life of our ancestors, who wanted the diversions and engagements of modern times to relieve a tedious evening. Hence we learn, that when a company was assembled, if a juggler or a minstrel were not present, it was their custom to entertain themselves by relating or hearing a

<sup>1</sup> Cap. xi.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. lxxii. b, col. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. Lat.* lib. iii. c. 8, pag. 552, edit. 1627.

<sup>4</sup> [Shakespeare's Library (1843), i. Introd. to *Apollonius of Tyre*. The MS. edited by Mr. Thorpe (from the library of C. C. C. Cambridge) is merely a fragment.]

series of adventures. Thus the general plan of the *Canterbury Tales*, which at first sight seems to be merely an ingenious invention of the poet to serve a particular occasion, is in great measure founded on a fashion of ancient life: and Chaucer, in supposing each of the pilgrims to tell a tale as they are travelling to Becket's shrine, only makes them adopt a mode of amusement which was common to the conversations of his age. I do not deny that Chaucer has shown his address in the use and application of this practice.

So habitual was this amusement in the dark ages, that the graver sort thought it unsafe for ecclesiastics, if the subjects admitted any degree of levity. The following curious injunction was deemed necessary, in a code of statutes assigned to a college at Oxford in the year 1292. I give it in English: "CH. xx.—The fellows shall all live honestly, as becomes Clerks.—They shall not rehearse, sing, nor willingly hear, ballads or tales of lovers, which tend to lasciviousness and idleness."<sup>1</sup> Yet the libraries of our monasteries, as I have before observed, were filled with romances. In that of Croyland-abbey we find even archbishop Turpin's romance, placed on the same shelf with Robert Tumbeley on the Canticles, Roger Dymock against Wickliffe, and Thomas Waleys on the Psalter. But their apology must be, that they thought this a true history: at least that an archbishop could write nothing but truth. Not to mention that the general subject of those books was the triumphs of Christianity over paganism.<sup>2</sup>

CHAP. clvi. Ovid, in his *Trojan War*, is cited for the story of Achilles disguised in female apparel.

Gower has this history more at large in the *Confessio Amantis*: but he refers to a *Cronike*, which seems to be the *boke of Troie*, mentioned at the end of the chapter.<sup>3</sup>

CHAP. clvii. The porter of a gate at Rome, who taxes all deformed persons entering the city. This tale is in Alphonsus and in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*.<sup>4</sup>

CHAP. clviii. The discovery of the gigantic body of Pallas, son of Evander, at Rome, which exceeded in height the walls of the city, was uncorrupted, and accompanied with a burning lamp, two thousand two hundred and forty years after the destruction of Troy. His wound was fresh, which was four feet and a half in length.

It is curious to observe the romantic exaggerations of the classical story.

CHAP. clix. Josephus, in his book, *De Causis rerum naturalium*, is quoted, for Noah's discovery of wine.

I know not any book of Josephus on this subject. The first editor of the Latin Josephus was Ludovicus Cendrata of Verona, who was ignorant that he was publishing a modern translation. In

<sup>1</sup> *Cantilenas vel fabulas de Amasis, &c.*—MS. Registr. Univ. Oxon. D. b, f. 76. See p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Leland, *Coll.* iii. p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. v. fol. 99, b, col. 2. See fol. 101 a, col. 1, 2.

<sup>4</sup> Nov. 50.

the Dedication he complains that the manuscript was brought to him from [Bologna] so ill-written, that it was often impossible even to guess at Josephus's words. And in another place, he says Josephus first wrote the *Antiquitates* in Hebrew, and that he afterwards translated them from Hebrew into Greek, and from Greek into Latin.<sup>1</sup> [The last was first printed at Augsburg in or perhaps before 1470.]

The substance of this chapter is founded on a Rabbinical tradition, related by Fabricius.<sup>2</sup> When Noah planted the vine, Satan attended, and sacrificed a sheep, a lion, an ape, and a sow. These animals were to symbolise the gradations of ebriety. When a man begins to drink, he is meek and ignorant as the lamb, then becomes bold as the lion, his courage is soon transformed into the foolishness of the ape, and at last he wallows in the mire like the sow. Chaucer says in the *Manciple's Prologue*:

I trowe that ye dronken hau *wyns of ape*,  
And that is whan men playen with a straw.<sup>3</sup>

In the old *Kalendrier des Bergers*, as Mr. Tyrwhitt has remarked, *Vin de singe*, *vin de mouton*, *vin de lyon*, and *vin de porceau*, are mentioned, in their respective operations on the four temperaments of the human body.

CHAP. clxi. Of a hill in a forest of England, where if a hunter fate after the chase, he was refreshed by a miraculous person of a mild aspect, bearing a capacious horn, adorned with gems and gold,<sup>4</sup> and filled with the most delicious liquor. This person instantly disappeared after administering the draught, which was of so wonderful a nature as to dispel the most oppressive lassitude, and to make the body more vigorous than before. At length a hunter having drank of this horn, ungratefully refused to return it to the friendly apparition; and his master, the lord of the forest, lest he should appear to countenance so atrocious a theft, gave it to King Henry the elder.<sup>5</sup>

This story, which seems imperfect, I suppose, is from Gervase of Tilbury.

CHAP. clxii. The same author is cited for an account of a hill in Castile, on which was a palace of demons.

Whenever our compiler quotes Gervase of Tilbury, the reference is to his *Otia Imperialia*, which is addressed to the Emperor Otho the Fourth, and contains his *Commentarius de regnis Imperatorum Romanorum*, his *Mundi Descriptio*, and his *Tractatus de Mirabilibus*

<sup>1</sup> [Again at] Verona, 1480. By Peter Mauffer, a Frenchman. It is a most beautiful and costly book, printed on vellum in folio. [But see Brunet (*Manuel*, dern. édit. iii. 569—71.)]

<sup>2</sup> *Cod. Pseudepigr. Vet. Testam.* vol. i. p. 275.

<sup>3</sup> [Bell's *Chaucer*, iii. 237-8.]

<sup>4</sup> The text says, "Such a one as is used at this day."

<sup>5</sup> That is, Henry the First, king of England.

*Mundi*. All these four have been improperly supposed to be separate works.

CHAP. clxiii. King Alexander's son Celestinus.

CHAP. clxvii. The archer and the nightingale.

This fable is told in the Greek legend of *Barlaam and Josaphat*, written by Johannes Damascenus.<sup>1</sup> And in Caxton's *Golden Legend*.<sup>2</sup> It is also found in the *Clericalis Disciplina* of Alphonsus.

CHAP. clxviii. Barlaam is cited for the story of a man who, flying from a unicorn, and falling into a deep and noisome pit, hung on the boughs of a lofty tree which grew from the bottom. On looking downward he saw a huge dragon twisted round the trunk, and gaping to devour him. He also observed two mice gnawing at the roots of the tree, which began to totter. Four white vipers impregnated the air of the pit with their poisonous breath. Looking about him, he discovered a stream of honey distilling from one of the branches of the tree, which he began eagerly to devour, without regarding his dangerous situation. The tree soon fell: he found himself struggling in a loathsome quagmire, and was instantly swallowed by the dragon.

This is another of Barlaam's apologues in Damascenus's romance of *Barlaam and Josaphat*: and which has been adopted into the Lives of the Saints by Surius and others.<sup>3</sup> A *Moralisation* is subjoined, exactly agreeing with that in the *Gesta*.<sup>4</sup>

CHAP. clixix. Trogus Pompeius is cited for the wise legislation of Ligurius, a noble knight.

Our compiler here means Justin's abridgment of Trogus, which, to the irreparable injury of literature, soon destroyed its original. An early epitome of Livy would have been attended with the same unhappy consequences.

CHAP. clxx. The dice player and Saint Bernard.

This is from Saint Bernard's legend.<sup>5</sup>

CHAP. clxxi. The two knights of Egypt and Baldach.

This is the story of Boccaccio's popular novel of *Tito and Gisippo*, and of Lydgate's *Tale of two Marchants of Egypt and of Baldad*, a manuscript poem in the British Museum, and [once] in the library of Doctor Askew.<sup>6</sup> Peter Alphonsus is quoted for this story; and it makes the second Fable of his *Clericalis Disciplina*.

CHAP. clxxii. A king of England has two knights, named Guido and Tirius. Guido having achieved many splendid exploits for the love of a beautiful lady, at length married her. Three days after his marriage he saw a vision, which summoned him to engage in the holy war. At parting she gave him a ring, saying, "As often as you

<sup>1</sup> Opp. *ut supr.* p. 22. See also Surius, *ut supr.* Novembris. 27, pag. 565.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. ccclxxxii. b. <sup>3</sup> See Caxton's *Golden Legend*, fol. cccclxxxiii. a.

<sup>4</sup> See Damascenus, *ut supr.* pag. 31. And *Metrical Lives of Saints*, MSS. Bodl. f. 293, b.

<sup>5</sup> See Caxton, *Gold. Leg.* f. cxxix. b.

<sup>6</sup> R. Edwards [the Elder] has a play on this story, [the *History of Damon and Pythias*, not printed till 1571.]

look on this ring, remember me." Soon after his departure she had a son. After various adventures, in which his friend Tirus had a share, at the end of seven years he returned to England in the habit of a pilgrim. Coming to his castle, he saw at the gate his lady sitting, and distributing alms to a crowd of poor people ; ordering them all to pray for the return of her lord Guido from the holy land. She was on that day accompanied by her son, a little boy, very beautiful and richly appareled ; and who hearing his mother, as she was distributing her alms, perpetually recommending Guido to their prayers, asked if that was his father ? Among others, she gave alms to her husband Guido, not knowing him in the pilgrim's disguise. Guido, seeing the little boy, took him in his arms and kissed him, saying, " O, my sweet son, may God give you grace to please him !" For this boldness he was reproved by the attendants. But the lady, finding him destitute and a stranger, assigned him a cottage in a neighbouring forest. Soon afterwards falling sick, he said to his servant, " Carry this ring to your lady, and tell her, if she desires ever to see me again, to come hither without delay." The servant conveyed the ring ; but before she arrived he was dead. She threw herself on his body, and exclaimed with tears, " Where are now my alms which I daily gave for my lord ? I saw you receive those alms, but I knew you not. You beheld, embraced, and kissed your own son, but did not discover yourself to him nor to me. What have I done, that I shall see you no more ? " She then interred him magnificently.

The reader perceives this is the story of Guido or Guy, earl of Warwick ; and probably this is the early outline of the life and death of that renowned champion.

Many romances were at first little more than legends of devotion, containing the pilgrimage of an old warrior. At length, as chivalry came more into vogue, and the stores of invention were increased, the youthful and active part of the pilgrim's life was also written, and a long series of imaginary martial adventures was added, in which his religious was eclipsed by his heroic character, and the penitent was lost in the knight-errant. That which was the principal subject of the short and simple legend, became only the remote catastrophe of the voluminous romance ; and hence by degrees it was almost an established rule of every romance for the knight to end his days in a hermitage. Cervantes has ridiculed this circumstance with great pleasantry, where Don Quixote holds a grave debate with Sancho, whether he shall turn saint or archbishop.

So reciprocal, or rather so convertible, was the pious and the military character, that even some of the apostles had their romance. In the ninth century, the chivalrous and fabling spirit of the Spaniards transformed Saint James into a knight. They pretended that he appeared and fought with irresistible fury, completely armed, and mounted on a stately white horse, in most of their engagements with the Moors ; and because, by his superior prowess in these bloody conflicts, he was supposed to have freed the Spaniards from paying

the annual tribute of a hundred christian virgins to their infidel enemies, they represented him as a professed and powerful champion of distressed damfels. This apotheosis of chivalry, in the person of their own apostle, must have ever afterwards contributed to exaggerate the characteristical romantic heroism of the Spaniards, by which it was occasioned ; and to propagate, through succeeding ages, a stronger veneration for that species of military enthusiasm to which they were naturally devoted. It is certain that, in consequence of these illustrious achievements in the Moorish wars, Saint James was constituted patron of Spain, and became the founder of one of the most magnificent shrines and of the most opulent order of knighthood, now existing in Christendom. The legend of this invincible apostle is inserted in the Mosarabic liturgy.

CHAP. clxxiii. A king goes to a fair, carrying in his train a master with one of his scholars, who expose six bundles, containing a system of ethics, to sale.<sup>1</sup>

Among the revenues accruing to the crown of England from the Fair of Saint Botolph at Boston in Lincolnshire, within the Honour of Richmond, mention is made of the royal pavilion or booth which stood in the fair, about the year 1280. This fair was regularly frequented by merchants from the most capital trading towns of Normandy, Germany, Flanders, and other countries.<sup>2</sup> The high rent of these lodges is a proof that they were considerable edifices in point of size and accommodation.

CHAP. clxxiv. The fable of a serpent cherished in a man's bosom.<sup>3</sup>

[In] the year [1473], a collection of Latin fables, in six books, distinguished by the name of Esop, was published [at Rome, and about the same time, though without any note of place, date, or printer] in Germany. The three first books consist of the sixty anonymous elegiac fables, [sometimes attributed to Hildebert de Tours,] printed in Nevelet's collection under the title of *Anonymous Fabulae Aesopicae*, [of which Caxton printed in 1484 an English version] with a few variations : under each is a fable in prose on the same subject from Romulus, or the old prose Latin *Aesop*, which was probably fabricated in the twelfth century. The fourth book has the remaining fables of Romulus in prose only.

<sup>1</sup> Compare Matth. Paris. edit. Wats. p. 927, 40, and p. 751, 10.

<sup>2</sup> " Ibidem [in feria] sunt quædam domus quæ dicuntur Bothæ regiæ, quæ valent per annum xxviii. l. xiii. s. iii. d. Ibidem sunt quædam domus quas Mercatores de Ypre tenent, quæ valent per annum, xx. l. Et quædam domus quas Mercatores de Cadomo<sup>1</sup> et Ostogonio<sup>2</sup> tenent, xi. l. et quædam domus quas Mercatores de Anaco<sup>3</sup> tenent, xiii. l. vi. s. viii. d. Et quædam domus quas Mercatores de Colonia tenent, xxv. l. x. s."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> This fable is in Alfonsus's *Clericalis Disciplina*.

<sup>1</sup> Caen in Normandy.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps Ostend.

<sup>3</sup> Perhaps *Le País d'Aunis*, between the Provinces of Poitou and Santone, where is Rochelle, a famous port and mart.

<sup>4</sup> *Registr. Honoris de Richmond*, 1722. Num. viii. Append. p. 39.

The fifth, containing one or two fables only, which were never called *Æsop's*, is taken from Alphonfus, the *Gesta Romanorum*, the *Calila u Damnab*, and other sources. The sixth and last book has seventeen fables *ex translatione Rinucci*, that is Rinucius, who translated Planudes's *Life of Æsop* and sixty-nine of his fables, from Greek into Latin, in the fifteenth century. This collection soon afterwards was circulated in the French version, which Caxton translated into English.

In an ancient general chronicle, printed at Lubec in 1475, and entitled *Rudimentum Novitiorum*,<sup>1</sup> a short life of *Æsop* is introduced, together with twenty-nine of his fables.

CHAP. clxxvii. The feast of King Ahasuerus and Esther.

I have mentioned a metrical romance on this subject; and I have before observed, that Thomas of Elmham, [the] chronicler, calls the coronation-feast of King Henry VI. a second feast of Ahasuerus. Hence also Chaucer's allusion at the marriage of January and May, while they are at the solemnity of the wedding dinner which is very splendid :

“ Quene Esther loked ner with soch an eye  
On Assuere, so meke a loke hath she.<sup>2</sup>

Froissart, an historian who shares the merit with Philip de Comines of describing every thing, gives this idea of the solemnity of a dinner on Christmas-day, at which he was present, in the hall of the castle of Gafton earl of Foix at Ortez in Bevern, under the year 1388. At the upper or first table, he says, sate four bishops, then the earl, three viscounts, and an English knight belonging to the duke of Lancaster. At another table, five abbots and two knights of Arragon. At another, many barons and knights of Gascony and Bigorre. At another, a great number of knights of Bevern. Four knights were the chief stewards of the hall, and the two bastard brothers of the earl served at the high table. “ The erles two sonnes, sir Yvan of Leschell was sewer, and sir Gracyen bare his cuppe.<sup>3</sup> And there

<sup>1</sup> In this work the following question is discussed, originally, I believe, started by Saint Austin, and perhaps determined by Thomas Aquinas, “ An Angelus possit coire cum Mulieribus, et generare Gigantes? ” The writer says, “ Eſopus adelphus claruit tempore Cyri regis Persarum : vir ingeniosus et prudens, qui confinxit fabulas elegantes. Quas Romulus postmodum de greco tranſtulit in latinum, et filio suo Tibertino direxit,” &c. fol. 237, a. The whole of this paſſage about *Æſop* is transcribed from Vincent of Beauvais, (lib. iii. c. ii.)

<sup>2</sup> *March. Tale*, v. 1260.

<sup>3</sup> In the old romance or Lay of *Emare*, a beautiful use is made of the Lady *Emare*'s son serving as cup-bearer to the king of Galicia : by which means, the king discovers the boy to be his son, and in consequence finds out his queen *Emare*, whom he had long lost. The paſſage also points out the duties of this office. MSS. Cott. Calig. A. 2, f. 69. *Emare* says to the young prince, her son :—

“ To-morowe thou shall serve yn halle  
In a kurtyll of ryche palle,<sup>1</sup>  
Byfore thys nobull kyng ;

<sup>1</sup> a tunic of rich cloth.

were many mynstrelles, as well of his owne as of straungers, and eche of them dyde their devoyre in their faculties. The same day th' erle of Foiz gave to harauldes and mynstrelles the somme of fyve hundred frankes: and gave to the duke of Touraynes mynstrelles,

Loke, sone,<sup>1</sup> so curteys thou be,  
That no mon fynde chalange to the  
In no manere thyng.<sup>2</sup>  
When the kynge is served of spycerye,  
Knele thou downe haftlyle,  
And take hys hond yn thyn;  
And when thou haft so done,  
Take the kuppe of golde, sone,  
And serve hym of the wyne.  
And what that he speketh to the,  
Cum anon and tell me,  
On goddes blesyng and myne.  
The chylde<sup>3</sup> wente ynto the hall  
Amonge the lordes grete and small,  
That lufsume wer unther lyne:<sup>4</sup>  
Then the lordes, that wer grete,  
Wysh,<sup>5</sup> and wente to her mete;  
Mynstrelles browght yn the kours,<sup>6</sup>  
The chylde hem served so curteyfly,  
All hym loved that hym sy,<sup>7</sup>  
And spake hym grete honowres.  
Then sayde all that loked hym upon,  
So curteys a chyld sawe they never non,  
In halle ny yn bowres.  
The kynge sayde to hym yn game,  
Swete sone, what ys thy name?  
Lord, he sayd, y hyghth<sup>8</sup> Segramowres.  
Then that nobull kynge  
Toke up a grete sykyng,<sup>9</sup>  
For hys sone<sup>10</sup> hyght fo:  
Certys, withouten lesyng,  
The teres out of hys yen<sup>11</sup> gan wryng,  
In herte he was full woo:  
Nevertheles he lette be,  
And loked on the chylde so fre,<sup>12</sup>  
And mykell<sup>13</sup> he loved hem thoo.<sup>14</sup>  
Then the lordes that wer grete  
Whefshen ayeyn<sup>15</sup> aftyr mete,  
And then com spycerye.<sup>16</sup>  
The chyld, that was of chere swete,  
On hys kne downe he fete,<sup>17</sup>  
And served hym curteyflye.  
The kynge called the burgeys hym tyll,  
And sayde, Syr, yf hyt be thy wyll,  
Yf me this lytill body;<sup>18</sup>  
I shall hym make lorde of town and towr,  
Of hye halles and of bowr,  
I love hym spesyally," &c.

<sup>1</sup> son.<sup>4</sup> richly apparellled.<sup>8</sup> I am called.<sup>12</sup> the boy so beautiful.<sup>16</sup> spicer, spiced wine.<sup>2</sup> may accuse thee of want of courtesy.<sup>5</sup> wasshed.<sup>9</sup> fighing.<sup>13</sup> greatly.<sup>17</sup> bowed his knee.<sup>6</sup> course.<sup>10</sup> his son.<sup>14</sup> then.<sup>15</sup> wasshed again.<sup>3</sup> the boy.<sup>7</sup> faw.<sup>11</sup> eyen, eyes.<sup>15</sup> wasshed again.<sup>18</sup> give me this boy.

gownes of clothe of golde furred with ermyns, valued at two hundred frankes. This dyner endured four houres.”<sup>1</sup> Froissart, who was entertained in this castle for twelve weeks, thus describes the earl’s ordinary mode of supping. “In this estate the erle of Foiz lyved. And at mydnight whan he came out of his chambre into the hall to supper, he had ever before hym xii. torches brennyng,<sup>2</sup> borne by xii. varlettes [valets] standyng before his table all supper: they gave a gret light, and the hall ever full of knightes and squyers; and many other tables dressed to suppe who wolde. Ther was none shulde speke to hym at his table, but if he were called. His meate was lightlye wylde foule. . . . He had great pleasure in armony of instrumyentes, he coude do it right well hymselfe: he wolde have songes song before him. He wolde gladlye se confeytes [conceits] and fantasies at his table. And whan he had sene it, than he wolde sende it to the other tables. There was sene in his hall, chambre, and court knyghtes and squyers of honour goyng up and downe, and talkyng of armes and of amours,”<sup>3</sup> &c. After supper, Froissart was admitted to an audience with this magnificent earl, and used to read to him a book of sonnets, rondeaus, and virelays, written by a gentyll duke of Luxemburgh.<sup>4</sup>

In this age of curiosity, distinguished for its love of historical anecdotes and the investigation of ancient manners, it is extraordinary that a new translation should not be made of Froissart from a collated and corrected original of the French.<sup>5</sup> Froissart is commonly ranked with romances: but it ought to be remembered that he is the historian of a romantic age, when those manners which form the fantastic books of chivalry were actually practised. As he received his multifarious intelligence from such a variety of vouchers, and of different nations, and almost always collected his knowledge of events from report rather than from written or recorded evidence, his notices of persons and places are frequently confused and inexact. Many of these petty incorrectnesses are not, however, to be imputed to Froissart: and it may seem surprising, that there are not more inaccuracies of this kind in a voluminous chronicle, treating

<sup>1</sup> *Chron.* vol. ii. fol. xxxvi. a. Transl. Bern. 1523.

<sup>2</sup> It appears that candles were borne by domestics, and not placed on the table, at a very early period in France. Gregory of Tours mentions a piece of savage merriment practised by a feudal lord at supper, on one of his *valets de chandelle*, in consequence of this custom. Greg. Turon. *Hist.* lib. v. c. iii. fol. 34, b, edit. 1522. It is probable that our proverbial scoff, “You are not fit to hold a candle to him,” took its rise from this fashion. See [*English Prov.* edit. Hazlitt, p. 349], and Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 4:—

“I’ll be a *Candle-holder*, and look on.”

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* fol. xxx. a, col. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* col. 1.

<sup>5</sup> [It can scarcely be said that the translation by Johnes has accomplished this great desideratum. Lord Berners’s version, as a monument of sterling old English, is undoubtedly valuable, but on no other account. Sir F. Madden justly censures Buchon’s edit. of the French, 1824, on account of the modernization of the orthography. But he might have extended his criticism to the corruptions and falsifications of the text.]

of the affairs of England, and abounding in English appellations, composed by a Frenchman, and printed in France. Whoever will take the pains to compare this author with the coeval records in Rymer, will find numerous instances of his truth and integrity in relating the more public and important transactions of his own times. Why he should not have been honoured with a modern edition at the Louvre, it is easy to conceive : the French have a national prejudice against a writer, who has been so much more complaisant to England than to their own country. Upon the whole, if Froissart should be neglected by the historical reader for his want of precision and authenticity, he will at least be valued by the philosopher for his striking pictures of life, drawn without reserve or affectation from real nature with a faithful and free pencil, and by one who had the best opportunities of observation, who was welcome alike to the feudal castle or the royal palace, and who mingled in the bustle and business of the world, at that very curious period of society, when manners are very far refined, and yet retain a considerable tincture of barbarism. But I cannot better express my sentiments on this subject, than in the words of Montaigne. “ *J'aime les Historiens ou fort simples ou excellens. Les simples qui n'ont point de quoy y mesler quelque chose du leur, et qui n'y apportent que le soin et la diligence de ramasser tout ce qui vient a leur notice, et d'en-registrer a la bonne foy toutes choses sans chois et sans triage, nous laissons le jugement entier pour la connoissance de la verite.* ” Tel est entre autres pour example le bon Froissard, qui a marché en son enterprise d'une si franche naïveté, qu'ayant fait une faute il ne craint aucunement de la reconnoistre et corriger en l'endroit, ou il en a été aderty : et qui nous represente la diversité même des bruits qui courroient, et les differens rapports qu'on lui faisoit. C'est la matière de l'*Histoire nue et informe* ; chacun en peut faire son profit autant qu'il a d'entendement.”<sup>1</sup>

CHAP. clxxviii. A king is desirous to know how to rule himself and his kingdom. One of his wise men presents an allegorical picture on the wall ; from which, after much study, he acquires the desired instruction.

In the original eastern apologue, perhaps this was a piece of tapestry. From the cultivation of the textorial arts among the orientals came Darius's wonderful cloth above mentioned<sup>2</sup> and the idea of the robe richly embroidered and embossed with stories of romance and other imageries in the romance of *Emare*, which forms one of the finest descriptions of the kind that I have seen in Gothic poetry, and which I shall therefore not scruple to give at large :

Sone astur yo a whyle,  
The ryche kynge of Cesyle<sup>3</sup>  
To the emperor gane wende ;<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Effais*, livre ii. ch. x. p. 409, edit. 1598.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. xx.

<sup>3</sup> Sicily.

<sup>4</sup> went to.

A ryche present wyth hym he browght,  
 A clothe that was wordly<sup>1</sup> wrought,  
 He welcomed hym as the hende,<sup>2</sup>  
 Syr Tergaunte, that nobyll knyght hyghe,  
 He presented the emperour ryght,  
 And sette hym on hys kne,<sup>3</sup>  
 Wyth that cloth rychly dyght ;  
 Full of stones thar hyt was pyght,  
 As thykke as hit myght be :  
 Off topaze and rubyes,  
 And other stones of myche prys  
 That semely wer to se ;  
 Of crapowtes and nakette,  
 As thykke ar they sette,  
 For sothe, as y say the.<sup>4</sup>  
 The cloth was dysplayed sone :  
 The emperour lokede therupone  
 And myght hyt<sup>5</sup> not se ;  
 For glysteryng of the ryche ston,  
 Redy fyghe had he non,  
 And sayde, how may this be ?  
 The emperour sayde on hygh,  
 Seretes,<sup>6</sup> thys ys a fayry,<sup>7</sup>  
 Or ellys a vanyte.  
 The kyng of Cysyle answered than,  
 So ryche a jwell<sup>8</sup> ys ther non  
 In all Cryfytante.  
 The amerayle dowghter of hethennes<sup>9</sup>  
 Made this cloth, withouten lees,<sup>10</sup>  
 And wrowghte hit all with pride ;  
 And purtreyed hyt with gret honour,  
 Wyth ryche golde and aour,<sup>11</sup>  
 And stones on ylke<sup>12</sup> a syde.  
 And as the story telles yn honde,  
 The stones that yn this cloth stonde  
 Sowghte<sup>13</sup> they wer full wyde :  
 Seven wynter hyt was yn makyng,  
 Or hyt was browght to endyng,  
 In hert ys not to hyde.  
 In that on korner made was

<sup>1</sup> worthily.

<sup>2</sup> courteously, but, I believe there is a slight corruption.

<sup>3</sup> he presented it kneeling.

<sup>4</sup> I tell thee.

<sup>5</sup> could not see it.

<sup>6</sup> certainly.

<sup>7</sup> an illusion, a piece of enchantment.

<sup>8</sup> jewel was anciently any precious thing.

<sup>9</sup> The daughter of the Amerayle of the Saracens. Amiral, in the eastern languages, was the governor, or prince, of a province, from the Arabic *emir*, lord. In this sense *amirayl* is used by Robert of Gloucester. Hence, by corruption, the word *admiral*, used in a restricted sense for the commander of a fleet; Milton, who knew the original, in that sense writes *ammiral*. *Parad. L. i.* 294. Dufresne thinks that our *naval* *amiral*, *i. e.* *admiral*, came from the crusades, where the Christians heard it used by the Saracens (in consequence of its general signification) for the title of the leader of their fleets; and that from the Mediterranean states it was propagated over Europe. [But the present editor concurs rather with Mr. T. Wright's etymology—*Emir alma*, or *Emir of the water*, the title of the naval commanders, who were set over the Saracen ships during the Arabian domination in Spain. See *Athenaeum*, March 6, 1847.]

<sup>10</sup> lying.

<sup>11</sup> azure.

<sup>12</sup> every.

<sup>13</sup> fought.

Idoyne and Amadas.<sup>1</sup>

Wynth love that was so trewe ;  
 For they loveden hem<sup>2</sup> wit honour,  
 Portrayed they wer wynth trewe-love flour  
 Of stones bryght of hewe.  
 Wynth carbunkull and safere,<sup>3</sup>  
 Kassydonyss and onyx so clere,  
 Sette in golde newe ;  
 Deamondes and rubyes,  
 And other stones of mychyll prysse,  
 And menstrellys with her gie.<sup>4</sup>  
 In that othyr corner was dyght  
 Trystram and Isowde so bryght,<sup>5</sup>  
 That semely wer to se ;  
 And for they loved hem ryght,  
 As full of stones ar they dyght,  
 As thykke as they may be . . . .  
 In the thrydde<sup>6</sup> korner wynth gret honour  
 Was Florys and dam Blawncheflour<sup>7</sup>  
 As love was hem betwene,  
 For they loved wynth honour,  
 Purtrayed they wer with trewe-love-flour,  
 With stones bryght and shene . . . .  
 In the fourthe korner was oon  
 Of Babylon the sowdan sonne,  
 The amerayles dowghtyr hym by :  
 For hys sake the cloth was wrowght,  
 She loved hym in hert and thowght,  
 As testymoyeth thyss storie.  
 The fayr mayden her byforn,  
 Was portrayed an unikorn,  
 With hys horn so hye ;  
 Flowres and bryddes on ylke a syde,  
 Wynth stones that wen sowght wyde,  
 Stuffed wynth ymagerye.  
 When the cloth to ende was wrowght,  
 To the sowdan sone<sup>8</sup> hyt was browght,  
 That semely was of syghe ;

<sup>1</sup> On one corner, or side, was embroidered the history of Idonia and Amadas. For their romance, see *infra*.

<sup>2</sup> loved each other.

<sup>3</sup> Sapphire.

<sup>4</sup> Figures of minstrels, with their music, or musical instruments.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Tristram and Bel Isolde, famous in king Arthur's romance.

<sup>6</sup> third.

<sup>7</sup> See what I have said of their romance, vol. ii. A MS. copy of it in [English] metre was destroyed in the fire which happened in the Cotton Library. [Vitell. D. iv. Three leaves of this MS. were recovered by me from the refuse fragments in 1842.—M.] Boccaccio has the adventures of Florio and Biancosiore, in his *Philocoopo*. Floris and Biancaflor are mentioned as illustrious lovers by Matfres Eymegau de Beziers, a bard of Languedoc, in his *Breviari d'Amor*, dated in the year 1288. MSS. Reg. 19, C. i. fol. 199. See Tyrwhitt's *Chaucer*, vol. iv. p. 169. [Mr. T. Wright specifies three MSS. of this tale, all imperfect in the same place. Publ. Lib. Camb. G g 4, 27; Auch. MS.; Bridgewater House. Of these two have been printed: the Auch. copy, very badly (as usual) by Hartshorne, and the Camb. MS. by Early Text Soc. with *King Horn*, 1866, edit. Lumley. See *Biog. Dict. Soc. U. Know.* Art. ASSENEDÆ.]

<sup>8</sup> [It was soon brought to the Soldan.—*Ritson*.]

My fadry was a nobyll man,  
Of the fowdan he hyt wan  
Wyth maystrye and myghth.<sup>1</sup>

Chaucer says, in the *Romaunt of the Rose*, that Richeſſe wore a robe of purple which—

Ful wele  
With orfraies laid was everie dele,  
And purtraied in the ribaninges  
Of Dukis stories and of Kinges.<sup>2</sup>

And, in the original,

Portraictes y furent d'orfroys  
Hystoryes d'empereurs et roys,<sup>3</sup>

CHAP. clxxxix. Cesarius, Saint Basil, the Gospel, Boethius, and Ovid, are quoted to shew the detestable guilt of gluttony and ebitiety.

Cesarius, I suppose, is a Cistercian monk of the thirteenth century who, beside voluminous lives, chronicles and homilies, wrote twelve books on the miracles, visions and examples of his own age. But there is another and an older monkish writer of the same name. In the British Museum there is a narrative taken from Cesarius, in old northern English, of a lady deceived by the fiends or the devil through the pride of rich clothing.<sup>4</sup>

CHAP. clxxx. Paul, the historian of the Longobards, is cited for the fidelity of the knight Onulphus.

CHAP. clxxxi. The sagacity of a lion.

This is the last chapter in the edition of 1488.

[MSS. of the Anglo-Latin *Gesta* are very numerous; but of the English *Gesta* the copies are equally rare. The work, having been exceedingly popular, was perhaps destroyed by constant perusal.]

There are two in the British Museum which, I think, contain each one hundred and two chapters.<sup>5</sup> But although the printed copies have one hundred and eighty-one stories or chapters, there are many in the MSS. which do not appear in the editions. The story of the *Casketts*, one of the principal incidents in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, is in one of the MSS. of the Museum.<sup>6</sup> This story, how-

<sup>1</sup> MSS. Cott. Calig. A. 2. fol. 69, ver. 80, *seq.* [Ritson's *Romances*, 1802, ii. 207-11.]

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 1076.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 1068.

<sup>4</sup> MSS. Harl. 1022, 4.

<sup>5</sup> MSS. Harl. 2270 and 5259.

<sup>6</sup> Viz. chap. xcix. fol. 78, b, MSS. Harl. 2270. In the *Clericalis Disciplina* of Alphonsus, there is a narrative of a king who kept a fabulator or story-teller, to lull him to sleep every night. The king, on some occasion being seized with an unusual disquietude of mind, ordered his fabulator to tell him longer stories, for that otherwise he could not fall asleep. The fabulator begins a longer story, but in the midst falls asleep himself, &c. I think I have seen this tale in some MS. of the *Gesta Romanorum*. [Tyrwhitt and Warton have both confounded this MS. copy (of the Anglo-Latin *Gesta*) with the edition; an error very properly reprehended by Douce. . . . A mere conjecture of Tyrwhitt, relative to Gower's story of Florent, has occasioned Warton, with his customary and lamentable carelessness, to assert that it was borrowed from the *Gesta*, and to be found in some MSS. of that work.—Madden. The error has been corrected in the present edition.]

ever, is in [the] old English translation printed [about 1520 and again in 1557]; from which, or more probably from [the modernized version by Richard Robinson,] printed in 1577, and entitled *A Record of Ancient Hystories, in Latin Gesta Romanorum*, corrected and bettered, Shakespeare borrowed it. The story of the *Bond* in the same play, which Shakespeare perhaps took from a translation of the *Pecorone* of Ser Giovanni Florentino,<sup>1</sup> makes the forty-eighth chapter of the last-mentioned manuscript.<sup>2</sup> Giovanni flourished about the year 1378.<sup>3</sup> In some of the manuscripts of this work<sup>4</sup> [occurs the original of] a tale by Occleve never printed, concerning the chaste consort of the Emperor Gerelaus, who is abused by his steward in his absence. This is the first stanza. A larger specimen shall appear in its place :

In Roman Actis writhen is thus,  
Somtime an emperour in the citee  
Of Rome regned, clept Gerelaus,  
Wich his noble astate and his dignite  
Governed wisely, and weddid had he  
The douȝtir of the kyng of Vngrye,  
A faire lady to every mannes ey.

At the end is the *Moralisation* in prose.<sup>5</sup>

I could point out other stories, beside those I have mentioned, for which Gower, Lydgate, Occleve, and the authors of the *Decameron* and the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, have been indebted to this admired repository.<sup>6</sup> Chaucer, as I have before remarked, has taken one of his Canterbury Tales from this collection; and it has been supposed that he alludes to it in the following couplet :

And Romain gestis makin remembrance  
Of many a veray trewe wife also—<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Giorn.* iv. Nov. 5. In Vincent of Beauvais, there is a story of a bond between a Christian and a Jew, in which the former uses a deception which occasions the conversion of the latter. *Hist. Specul.* fol. 181, a, edit. *ut supr.* Jews, yet under heavy restrictions, were originally tolerated in the Christian kingdoms of the dark ages, for the purpose of borrowing money, with which they supplied the exigencies of the state, and of merchants or others, on the most lucrative usurious contracts.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. 43 a.

<sup>3</sup> See Johnson and Steevens's Shakespeare, iii. p. 247, edit. *ut.*, and Tyrwhitt's Chaucer, iv. pp. 332, 334.

<sup>4</sup> *Gesta Romanorum*, MSS. Harl. 2270, chap. 101, fol. 80, a, where *Gerelaus* is *Menelaus*.

<sup>5</sup> MSS. Seld. Sup. 53, Bibl. Bodl. *De quadam bona et nobili Imperatrice*. It is introduced with "A Tale the which I in the *Roman* dedis," &c. Viz. MSS. Laud *ibid.* K. 78. See also MSS. Digb. 185, where, in the first line of the poem, we have, "In the *Roman* jefys written is this." It is in other MSS. of Occleve.

<sup>6</sup> Bonifacio Vanozzi, in *Lettere Mischiane alla Accademia Veneta*, 1606, p. 580, *et seqq.* says that Boccaccio borrowed [Nov. i. D. iii.] the novel of *Maseto da Lamپorecchio*, with many other parts of the *Decameron*, from an older collection of novels, "In uno libro de Novelle, et di Parlare Gentile, Anteriore al Boccaccio," &c., I believe, however, that many of the tales are of Boccaccio's own invention. He tells us himself, in the *Genealogia Deorum*, that when he was a little boy, he was fond of making *fittuncule*. Lib. xv. cap. x. p. 579, edit. Basil. 1532.

<sup>7</sup> *Merchant's Tale*, ver. 10158, edit. [Morris.] This may still be doubted, as

The plot also of the knight against Constance who, having killed Hermegild, puts the bloody knife into the hand of Constance while asleep, and her adventure with the steward, in the *Man of Lawes Tale*, are also taken from that manuscript chapter of this work, which I have just mentioned to have been versified by Occleve. The former of these incidents is thus treated by Occleve :

She with this jonge childe in the chambre lay  
Every niȝt where lay the earle and the countesse,<sup>1</sup>  
Bitween whose beddis brente a lampe alway.

• • • • •  
And he espied, by the lampes liȝt,  
The bedde where that lay this emprise  
With erlis douȝtur,<sup>2</sup> and as blyve riȝt,  
This feendly man his purpose and malice  
Thouȝte<sup>3</sup> for to fulfille and accomplice ;  
And so he dide : a longe knife out he drouȝe,<sup>4</sup>  
And ther with alle the maiden childe he slouȝe.<sup>5</sup>

Hir throte with the knyfe on two he kutte  
And as this emprise lay sleeping ;  
Into her honde this bloody knyfe he putte,  
For men shoulde have noon othir deernyng<sup>6</sup>  
But she had gilty ben of this murdring :  
And whanne that he had wrouȝte this cursidnesse,  
A noone oute of the chambre he gan hem dresse.<sup>7</sup>

The countesse after hir slepe awakid  
And to the emperesse bedde gan caste hir look  
And sy<sup>8</sup> the bloody knyfe in hir hande nakid,  
And for the feare she tremblid and quook.

• • • • •

She awakens the earl, who awakens the empreſs :

And hir awook, and thus to hir he cried,  
“Woman, what is that, that in thin hand I see ?  
What haſt thou doon, woman, for him that diede,  
What wickid spirit hath travaylid the ?”  
And as ſone as that adawed was ſhe,  
The knyfe fel oute of hir hand in the bedde,  
And ſhe bihilde the cloothis al forbledde,

And the childe dead, “Allas, ſhe cried, allas,  
How may this be, god woot alle I note howe,  
I am not privy to hir hevy caas,  
The gilte is not myne, I the childe not flowe.”<sup>9</sup>  
To which ſpake the counteffe, “What faift thou ?  
Excuse the not, thou maift not faie nay,  
The knyfe all bloody in thin hand I ſay.”<sup>10</sup>

from what has been ſaid above, the Roman *Gesta* were the Roman history in general.

<sup>1</sup> Here we ſee the ancient practice, even in great families, of one and the fame bedchamber ſerving for many perſons. Much of the humour in Chaucer's *Trampton Miller* arises from this circumstance. See the romance of *Syr Tryamore* [printed for the Percy Society], and Gower, *Conf. Am.* ii. f. 39, a.

<sup>2</sup> earl's daughter. <sup>3</sup> thought. <sup>4</sup> drew. <sup>5</sup> flew.

<sup>6</sup> opinion. <sup>7</sup> he haſtened, &c. <sup>8</sup> ſaw. <sup>9</sup> flew.

<sup>10</sup> ſaw. *Ut ſupr.* viz. MS. Seld. ſup. 45, qu. iv.

This story, but with some variation of circumstances, is told in the *Historical Mirror* of Vincent of Beauvais.<sup>1</sup>

But I hasten to point out the writer of the *Gesta Romanorum*, who has hitherto remained unknown to the most diligent inquirers in Gothic literature. He is Petrus Berchorius, or Pierre Bercheur, a native of Poitou, who died prior of the Benedictine convent of Saint Eloï at Paris in the year 1362.

For the knowledge of this very curious circumstance I am obliged to Salomon Glaffius, a celebrated theologist of Saxe-Gotha, in his *Pbilologia Sacra*,<sup>2</sup> written about the year 1623.<sup>3</sup> In his chapter *de Allegoriosis fabularum* he censures those writers who affect to interpret allegorically, not only texts of Scripture, but also poetical fables and profane histories, which they arbitrarily apply to the explication or confirmation of the mysteries of Christianity. He adds, "Hoc in studio excelluit quidam Petrus Berchorius, Pictaviensis, ordinis divi Benedicti: qui peculiari libro, *Gesta Romanorum*, necnon *Legendas Patrum* aliasque aniles fabulas allegorice ac mystice exposuit."<sup>4</sup> That is, "In this art excelled one Peter Berchorius, a Benedictine who, in a certain *peculiar* book, has expounded mystically and allegorically the Roman *Gests*, legends of saints, and other idle tales."<sup>5</sup> He then quotes for an example the whole one hundred and seventieth chapter of the *Gesta Romanorum*, containing the story of Saint Bernard and the Dice-player, together with its moralisation.<sup>6</sup>

Berchorius was one of the most learned divines of his country, and a voluminous writer. His three grand printed works are, 1, *Reductorium Morale super totam Biblam*, in twenty-four books; 2,

<sup>1</sup> *Specul. Histor.* lib. vii. c. 90, fol. 86, a.

<sup>2</sup> *Philologie Sacrae*, qua totius sacrosanctæ veteris et novi testamenti scripture tum stylus et literatura, tum sensus et genuinæ interpretationis ratio expenditur. Libri quinque, &c. edit. tert. Francof. et Hamb. 1653. [This opinion has been controverted by Mr. Douce in his *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, vol. ii. The most forcible argument there adduced is founded upon a very just inference, that the original author was a *German*. See below.—Price. But Sir F. Madden and several of the continental scholars concur with Warton's view.]

<sup>3</sup> From the date of the dedication. For his other works, which are very numerous, see the *Diarium Biographicum* of H. Witte, 1688, *sub ann.* 1665.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. ii. Part i. Tractat. ii. sect. iii. art. viii. pag. 312.

<sup>5</sup> Salmeron, a profound school-divine, who flourished about 1560, censures the unwarrantable liberty of the *Gesta Romanorum* in accommodating histories and fables to Christ and the church. *Comm. in Evangel. Hist.* 1602, i. pag. 356, Prol. xix. can. xxi.

<sup>6</sup> [The authors quoted by the compiler of the *Gesta* are also cited by the prior of St. Eloï, and the same stories are familiar to both. Besides those already pointed out by Warton, there are several more, of which the most remarkable is the "Wild tale" of the intractable elephant killed by two virgins, who cut off his head, and make purple of his blood, which occurs at p. 115 of the printed *Gesta*, and in the Dictionary of Berchorius, v. *ADULATIO*. . . . Another coincidence, which escaped Warton, deserves notice here. In the *Gesta*, cap. 160, is a legend of a lady possessed by a devil in the diocese of Valence, in Dauphiny, on the confines of Provence; and in the *Reductorium Morale* of Berchorius, lib. xiv. cap. 44, we find a story of a haunted castle, placed in the same locality; both of which tales might easily have been learnt by him when preceptor to the novices at Cluny.—Madden.]

*Repertorium* [or *Reductorium*] *Morale*, in fourteen books;<sup>1</sup> 3, *Dictionarium Morale*. Whoever shall have the patience or the curiosity to turn over a few pages of this immense treasure of multifarious erudition will soon see this assertion of Glaffius abundantly verified, and will be convinced beyond a doubt, from a general coincidence of plan, manner, method and execution, that the author of these volumes and of the *Gesta Romanorum* must be one and the same. The *Reductorium super Biblam*<sup>2</sup> contains all the stories and incidents in the Bible reduced into allegories.<sup>3</sup> The *Repertorium Morale* is a dictionary of things, persons and places; all which are supposed to be mystical, and which are therefore explained in their moral or practical sense. The *Dictionarium Morale* is in two parts, and seems principally designed to be a moral repertory for students in theology.

The moralisation, or moral explanation, which is added to every article, is commonly prefaced, as in the *Gesta*, with the introductory address of Carissimi. In the colophon, the *Gesta* is called *Ex gestis Romanorum Recollectorium*: a word much of a piece with his other titles of *Repertorium* and *Reductorium*. Four of the stories occurring in the *Gesta*, *The Discovery of the gigantic body of Pallas*,<sup>4</sup> *The subterraneous golden palace*,<sup>5</sup> *The adventures of the English knight in the bishopric of Ely*,<sup>6</sup> and *The miraculous born*,<sup>7</sup> are related in the fourteenth book of the *Repertorium Morale*. For the two last of these he quotes Gervase of Tilbury, as in his *Gesta*.<sup>8</sup> As a further proof of his allegorising genius I must add that he moralised all the stories in Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, in a work entitled, *Commentarius moralis, sive Allegoriae in Libros quindecim Ovidii Metamorphoseon*,<sup>9</sup> and now remaining in manuscript in the library of the monastery of Saint

<sup>1</sup> I use a folio edition of all these three works, in three volumes, printed at Venice in 1583. These pieces were all printed very early.

<sup>2</sup> This was first printed, Argentorat. 1473, fol. There was a very curious book in Lord Oxford's library, I am not sure whether the same, entitled *Moralizationes Bibliae*, Ulmæ, 1474, fol. With this colophon in the last page:—“Infinita dei clementia. Finitus est liber *Moralizationum Bibliarum* in ejusdem laudem et gloriam compilatus. Ac per industrium Joannem Zeiner de Reutlingen Artis impressorie magistrum non penna sed scagñeis characteribus in oppido Ulmensi artificialiter effigiat. Anno Incarnationis Domini millesimo quadringentessimo septuagesimo quarto Aprilis nono.” [See Brunet, *dern. edit.* i. 818-19. But his account is far from copious or satisfactory.]

<sup>3</sup> To this work Alanus de Lynne, a Carmelite of Lynn, in Norfolk, wrote an *Index* or *Tabula*, about the year [1420.] It is in MSS. Reg. 3 D. 3, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Cap. xlii. f. 643. He quotes *Chronica*, and says, that this happened in the reign of the Emperor Henry II. [See *Gest. Rom.* c. clviii.]

<sup>5</sup> Cap. lxxii. f. 689, col. 1, 2. He quotes for this story [*Gest. Rom.* c. cvii.] William of Malmesbury, but tells it in the words of Beauvais, *ut supr.*

<sup>6</sup> Fol. 610, col. 2 [*Gest. Rom.* c. clv.]. Here also his author is Gervase of Tilbury from whom, I think in the same chapter, he quotes part of King Arthur's Romance. See *Otia Imperial.* Dec. ii. c. 12.

<sup>7</sup> Fol. 610, *ut supr.* [*Gest. Rom.* c. lxi.]

<sup>8</sup> A moralisation is joined to these stories, with the introduction of Carissimi.

<sup>9</sup> See what he says of the *Fabulae Poetarum* (*Repertor. Moral.* lib. xiv. cap. i. f. 601, col. 2, ad calc.)

Germain.<sup>1</sup> [A somewhat similar work, by Thomas Walley or Wallensis, was printed in 1511.] Berchorius seems to have been strongly impressed with whatever related to the Roman affairs, and to have thought their history more interesting than that of any other people. This appears from the following passage, which I translate from the article *Roma* in his *Dictionarium Morale*, and which will also contribute to throw some other lights on this subject. "How many remarkable facts might be here collected concerning the virtues and vices of the Romans, did my design permit me to drop Moralities, and to enter upon an historical detail! For that most excellent historian Livy, unequalled for the dignity, brevity, and *difficulty* of his style (whose eloquence is so highly extolled by Saint Jerome, and whom I, however unworthy, have translated from Latin into French with great labour,<sup>2</sup> at the request of John the most famous King of France), records so many wonderful things of the prudence, fortitude, fidelity and friendship of the Roman people; as also of their quarrels, envy, pride, avarice, and other vices, which are indeed allied to virtues, and are such, to say the truth, as I never remember to have heard of in any nation besides. But because I do not mean to treat of historical affairs in the present work, the matter of which is entirely moral, I refer the historical reader to Livy himself, to Trogus Pompeius, Justin, Florus, and Orosius, who have all written histories of Rome; as also to Innocent who, in his book on the *Miseries of human nature*,<sup>3</sup> speaks largely of the vices of the Romans."<sup>4</sup> In the meantime we must remember that, at this particular period, the Roman history had become the grand object of the public taste in France. The king himself, as we have just seen, recommended a translation of Livy. French translations also of Sallust, Cæsar, and Lucan were now circulated. A Latin historical compilation called *Romuleon* was just published by a gentleman of France, which was soon afterwards translated into French. A collection of the *Gesta Romanorum* was therefore a popular subject: at least it produced a popular title, and was dictated by the fashion of the times.

I have here mentioned all the works of Berchorius, except his comment on prosody, called *Doctrinale metricum*, which was used as a school-book in France, till the manual of Despautere on that subject appeared.<sup>5</sup> Some biographers mention his *Tropologia*, his

<sup>1</sup> Oudin. *Comment. Scriptor. Eccles.* iii. p. 1064, 1723. I doubt whether this work was not translated into French by Guillaume Nangis, at the beginning of the fourteenth century. See *Mem. Lit.* xx. 751, 4to.

<sup>2</sup> I have mentioned this work below, vol. ii. It is remarkable that a copy of this manuscript in the British Museum is entitled, *Titus Livius Des Fais des Romains translate par Pierre Bercheuse*. MSS. Reg. 15 D. vi.

<sup>3</sup> Pope Innocent III., about the year 1200, wrote three books, *De Contemptu Mundi*, *five De Miseria humanae Conditionis*, printed Colon. 1496.

<sup>4</sup> *Diction. Moral.* P. iii. vol. ii. f. 274, col. 2, edit. 1583.—See *infra*, vol. ii.

<sup>5</sup> Oudin, *ubi supr.*

*Cosmographia*, and his *Breviatorium*. But the *Tropologia*<sup>1</sup> is nothing more than his *Reductorium* on the Bible; and probably the *Breviatorium* is the same.<sup>2</sup> The *Cosmographia* seems to be the fourteenth book of his *Repertorium Morale*, which treats of the wonders of various countries, and is chiefly taken from Solinus and Gervase of Tilbury.<sup>3</sup> He is said by the biographers to have written other smaller pieces, which they have not named or described. Among these is comprehended the *Gesta*, which we may conceive to have been thus undistinguished, either as having been neglected or proscribed by graver writers, or rather as having been probably disclaimed by its author, who saw it at length in the light of a juvenile performance, abounding in fantastic and unedifying narrations, which he judged unsuitable to his character, studies, and station.<sup>4</sup> Bafilius Johannes Heroldus, however, mentions Berchorius as the author of a *chronicon*, a word which may imply, though not with exact propriety, his *Gesta Romanorum*. It is in the epistle dedicatory of his edition of the *Chronicles* of Marianus Scotus and Martinus Polonus, addressed to our Queen Elizabeth; in which he promises to publish many Latin *chronica*, that is, those of Godfrey of Viterbo, Hugo Floriacensis, Conradus Engelhus, Hermannus Edituus, Lanfranc, Ivo, Robert of Saint Victor, Petrus Berchorius, and of many others, qui de *Temporibus scripsierunt*, who have written of times.<sup>5</sup> Paulus Langius, who wrote about the year 1400, in his enumeration of the writings of Berchorius, says nothing of this compilation.<sup>6</sup>

Had other authentic evidences been wanting, we are sure of the age in which Berchorius flourished,<sup>7</sup> from the circumstance of his being employed to translate *Livy* by John King of France, who acceded to the throne in the year 1350, and died in the year 1364.

Berchorius was constituted grammatical preceptor to the novices

<sup>1</sup> I have seen a very old black-letter edition, with the title, "Tropologiarum mysticarumque enarrationum," &c. Without date.

<sup>2</sup> But see Bibl. Sangerm. Cod. MS. 687. And G. Serpili Vit. Scriptor. Bibl. tom. vii. part ii. p. 44. Also Possevin, *Apparat. Sacr.* ii. p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> This is in some measure hinted by Oudin, *ubi supr.* "Egressus autem a Profanis et grammaticis Berchorius, animum Solidioribus applicuit," &c.

<sup>4</sup> Gesner adds, reciting his works, that he wrote "alia multa."—*Epitom. Bibl.* f. 147, b, Tig. 1555, fol. And Trithemius, "parvos sed multos tractatus."—*De Illusfr. Bened.* lib. ii. c. 131.

<sup>5</sup> Dat. 1559. Edit. Bafil. Oporin. No date, fol.

<sup>6</sup> *Chron. Citiz.* f. 841. Apud Pistorii *Illusfr. Vit. Scriptor*, &c. Francof. 1583, fol. Compare the *Chron.* of Phillipus Bergom, *ad ann. 1355*. ["It (the *Gesta*) must certainly have been written some years previous to the composition of the *Decameron* (1348-58), so as to allow of its having become sufficiently popular in Italy for Boccaccio to have borrowed its stories, and in England a more precise test (unknown to Warton and Douce) is furnished by the *Moralitates* of Robert Holcot, a celebrated theological writer of the Dominican Order, who died in 1349. These consist of forty-seven stories, with *Moralitates* much in the style of the *Gesta*, from which several of the stories are borrowed with scarcely a verbal alteration."—Madden's *Introd. to Gesta Roman.* iii.]

<sup>7</sup> That Berchorius died, and probably an old man, in the year 1362, we learn from his epitaph in the monastery of Saint Eloy at Paris, which is recited by Sweertius, and on other accounts deserves a place here:

of the Benedictine Congregation or monastery at Clugni, in the year 1340.<sup>1</sup> At which time he drew up his *Notes on the Prodigy* and his *Commentary on Ovid* for the use of his scholars. About the same time, and with a view of rendering their exercises in Latinity more agreeable and easy by an entertaining Latin story-book, yet resoluble into lessons of religion, he probably compiled the *Gesta*: perpetually addressing the application of every tale to his young audience, by the paternal and affectionate appellation of *Carissimi*.<sup>2</sup> There was therefore time enough for the *Gesta* to become a fashionable book of tales, before Boccaccio published his *Decameron*. The action of the *Decameron* being supposed in 1348, the year of the great pestilence, we may safely conjecture, that Boccaccio did not begin his work till after that period. An exact and ingenious critic has proved, that it was not finished till the year 1358.<sup>3</sup>

I have just observed, that Berchorius probably compiled this work for the use of his grammatical pupils. Were there not many good reasons for that supposition, I should be induced to think that it might have been intended as a book of stories for the purpose of preachers.<sup>4</sup> I have already given instances, that it was anciently

HIC JACET VENERABILIS MAGNÆ PRO-  
FUNDÆQUE SCIENTIÆ,  
ADMIRABILIS ET SUBTILIS ELOQUENTIÆ,  
F. PETRUS BERCOH,<sup>1</sup>  
PRIOR HUJUS PRIORATUS.  
QUI FUIT ORIUNDUS DE VILLA S. PETRI  
DE ITINERE<sup>2</sup>  
IN EPISCOPATU MAILLIZANCENS<sup>3</sup> IN  
PICTAVIA.  
QUI TEMPORE SUO FECIT OPERA SUA  
SOLEMNIA, SCILICET  
DICTIONARIUM, REDUCTORIUM,  
BREVIAATORIUM, DESCRIPTIONEM  
MUNDI,<sup>4</sup> TRANSLATIONEM CUJUSDAM  
LIBRI VETUSTISSIMI<sup>5</sup> DE LATINO IN  
GALLICUM, AD PRÆCEPTUM EXCEL-  
LENTISS.  
JOANNIS REGIS FRANCORUM.  
QUI OBIIT ANNO M.CCC.LXII.

Sweetii *Epitaphia Joco-steria*, 1645, p. 158. It must not be dissembled, that in the *Moralisation* of the hundred and forty-fifth chapter, a proverb is explained, *vulgariter*, in the German language, fol. 69, a, col. 2. And in the one hundred and forty-third chapter, a hunter has eight dogs who have German names, fol. 67, a, col. 1, *seq.* I suspect, nor is it improbable, that those German words were introduced by a German editor or printer.

<sup>1</sup> Oudin, *ubi supr.* p. 1063.

<sup>2</sup> This, by habit, and otherwise with no impropriety, he seems to have retained in his later and larger works.

<sup>3</sup> See Tyrwhitt's *Chaucer*, vol. iv. p. 115, *seq.*

<sup>4</sup> [When Warton uses here the term *compiled*, he must not be understood to

<sup>1</sup> Read Bercheur.

<sup>2</sup> That is, of the village of Saint Pierre du Chemin. Three leagues from Poitiers.

<sup>3</sup> Of Maillezais.

<sup>4</sup> The *Cosmographia* above-mentioned.

<sup>5</sup> Of Livy.

fashionable for preachers to enforce the several moral duties by applying fables or exemplary narratives; and, in the present case, the perpetual recurrence of the address of Carissimi might be brought in favour of this hypothesis. But I will here suggest an additional reason. Soon after the age of Berchorius, a similar collection of stories of the same cast was compiled, though not exactly in the same form, professedly designed for sermon-writers, and by one who was himself an eminent preacher: for rather before the year 1480, a Latin volume was printed in Germany, written by John Herolt, a Dominican friar of Basle, better known by the adopted and humble appellation of Discipulus, and who flourished about the year 1418. It consists of three parts. The first is entitled: *Incipiunt Sermones pernotabiles Discipuli de Sanctis per anni circulum.* That is, A set of sermons on the saints of the whole year. The second part, and with which I am now chiefly concerned, is a Promptuary or ample repository of examples for composing sermons; and in the prologue to this part the author says, that Saint Dominic always *abundabat exemplis* in his discourses, and that he constantly practised this popular mode of edification. This part contains a variety of little histories. Among others are the following: Chaucer's *Friar's tale*. Aristotle falling in love with a queen, who compels him to permit her to ride upon his back.<sup>1</sup> The boy who was kept in a dark cave till he was twelve years of age: and who being carried abroad, and presented with many striking objects, preferred a woman to all he had seen.<sup>2</sup> A boy educated in a desert is brought into a city, where he sees a woman whom he is taught to call a fine bird under the name of a goose, and on his return into the desert, desires his spiritual father to kill him a goose for his dinner.<sup>3</sup> These two last stories Boccaccio has worked into one. The old woman and her little dog:<sup>4</sup> this, as we have seen, is in the *Gesta Romanorum*.<sup>5</sup> The son who will not shoot at his father's dead body.<sup>6</sup> I give these as specimens of the collection. The third part contains stories for sermon-writers, consisting only of select miracles of the Virgin Mary. The first of these is the tale of the chaste Roman empress, occurring in the Harleian manuscripts of the *Gesta*, and versified by Occleve, yet with some variation.<sup>7</sup> This third part is closed with these words, which also end the volume: *Explicit tabula Exemplorum in tractatulo de Exemplis gloriose Virginis Marie contentorum.* I quote from the first edition, which is a clumsy folio in a rude Gothic letter, in two

mean that Berchorius invented the stories in the *Gesta*, the greater part at least of which must have been in existence before his time, as shown by Mr. Wright's collection of *Latin Stories*, printed for the Percy Society in 1842, and other similar monuments of ancient romantic literature. See also *Archæologia*, vol. xxxii.]

<sup>1</sup> *Exempl. lxvii. sub litera M.* "De regina quæ equitavit Aristotelem." He cites Jacobus de Vitriaco. [See *supr.*]

<sup>2</sup> *Exempl. xxiv. sub litera L.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid. Exempl. xxiii. [See supr.]*

<sup>4</sup> *Exempl. xii. sub lit. V.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ch. xxviii.*

<sup>6</sup> This is also in the *Gesta*, ch. xlv.—*Exempl. viii. lit. B.*

<sup>7</sup> *See supr. p. 295.*

volumes, without pagings, signatures, [and] initials. The place and year are also wanting; but it was certainly printed before 1480,<sup>1</sup> and probably at Nuremburgh. The same author [Johannes Herolt] also wrote a set of sermons called *Sermones de tempore*.<sup>2</sup> In these I find<sup>3</sup> [the story told by] Alphonsus, which in the *Gesta Romanorum* is the tale of the two knights of Egypt and Baldach,<sup>4</sup> and in Boccaccio's *Decameron* the history of *Tito and Gefippo*: Parnell's *Hermit*:<sup>5</sup> and the apologue of the king's brother who had heard the trumpet of Death:<sup>6</sup> both which last are also in the *Gesta*.<sup>7</sup> Such are the revolutions of taste, and so capricious the modes of composition, that a Latin homily-book of a German monk in the fifteenth century should exhibit outlines of the tales of Boccaccio, Chaucer and Parnell!

It may not be thought impertinent to close this discourse with a remark on the moralisations subjoined to the stories of the *Gesta Romanorum*. This was an age of vision and mystery: and every work was believed to contain a double or secondary meaning. Nothing escaped this eccentric spirit of refinement and abstraction: and together with the Bible, as we have seen, not only the general history of ancient times was explained allegorically, but even the poetical fictions of the classics were made to signify the great truths of religion with a degree of boldness and a want of discrimination, which in another age would have acquired the character of the most profane levity, if not of absolute impiety, and can only be defended from the simplicity of the state of knowledge which then prevailed.

Thus, God creating man of clay animated with the vital principle of respiration, was the story of Prometheus, who formed a man of similar materials to which he communicated life by fire stolen from heaven. Christ twice born, of his father God and of his mother Mary, was prefigured by Bacchus, who was first born of Semele, and afterwards of Jupiter. And as Minerva sprang from the brain of Jupiter, so Christ proceeded from God without a mother. Christ born of the Virgin Mary was expressed in the fable of Danae shut within a tower, through the covering of which Jupiter descended in a shower of gold, and begot Perseus. A&eon, killed by his own hounds, was a type of the persecution and death of our Saviour. The poet Lycophron relates that Hercules, in returning from the

<sup>1</sup> For the second edition is at Nuremburgh, 1482, fol. Others followed before 1500.

<sup>2</sup> The only edition I have seen, with the addition of the *Sermones de Sanctis* and the *Promptuarium Exemplorum* above mentioned, was printed by Flaccius, Argentin. 1499, fol. But [there was an edition in 1476.] At the close of the last sermon, he tells us why he chose to be styled Discipulus. Because, "non subtilia per modum Magistri, sed simplicia per modum Discipuli, conscripsi et collegi." I have seen also early impressions of his *Sermones Quadragefinales*, and of other pieces of the same sort. All his works were published together in three volumes, Mogunt. 1612, 4to. The *Examples* appeared separately, Daventr. 1481. Colon. 1485. Argentorat. 1489, 1490. Hagen. 1512, 1519, fol.

<sup>3</sup> Serm. cxxi. col. ii. signat. c 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. clxxi.

<sup>5</sup> Serm. liii.

<sup>6</sup> Serm. cix.

<sup>7</sup> Ch. lxxx. cxliii.

adventure of the Golden Fleece, was shipwrecked ; and that being devoured by a monstrous fish, he was disgorged alive on the shore after three days. Here was an obvious symbol of Christ's resurrection. [Thomas] Waleys, an English Franciscan of the thirteenth century, in his moral exposition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,<sup>1</sup> affords many other instances equally ridiculous, and forgot that he was describing a more heterogeneous chaos than that which makes so conspicuous a figure in his author's exordium, and which combines, amid the monstrous and indigested aggregate of its unnatural associations,

Sine pondere habentia pondus.<sup>2</sup>

At length, compositions professedly allegorical, with which that age abounded, were resolved into allegories for which they were never intended. In the famous *Roman de la Rose*, written about the year 1310, the poet couches the difficulties of an ardent lover in attaining the object of his passion under the allegory of a rose, which is gathered in a delicious but almost inaccessible garden. The theologists proved this rose to be the white rose of Jericho, the new Jerusalem, a state of grace, divine wisdom, the holy Virgin, or eternal beatitude, at none of which obstinate heretics can ever arrive. The chemists pretended that it was the philosopher's stone ; the civilians, that it was the most consummate point of equitable decision ; and the physicians, that it was an infallible panacea. In a word other professions, in the most elaborate commentaries, explained away the lover's rose into the mysteries of their own respective science. In conformity to this practice, Tasso allegorised his own poem : and a flimsy structure of morality was raised on the chimerical conceptions of Ariosto's *Orlando*. In the year 1577, a translation of a part of *Amadis de Gaule* appeared in France with a learned preface, developing the valuable stores of profound instruction, concealed under the naked letter of the old romances, which were discernible only to the intelligent, and totally unperceived by common readers who, instead of plucking the fruit, were obliged to rest contented with a simple *Fleur de la Lecture littérale*. Even Spenser, at a later period, could not indulge his native impulse to descriptions of chivalry, without framing such a story as conveyed, under the *dark conceit* of ideal champions, a set of historic transactions and an exemplification of the nature of the twelve moral virtues. He presents his fantastic queen with a rich romantic mirror, which showed the wondrous achievements of her magnificent ancestry :

And thou, O fayrest Princesse under sky,  
In this fayre mirrour maist behold thy face,  
And thine owne realmes in lond of Faery,  
And in this antique ymage thy great auncestry.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have before mentioned [the *Moralization of Ovid* by] Berchorius.

<sup>2</sup> *Metam.* l. i. 20. [But it is extremely probable that this volume by Waleys was in print long before. See Mr. Hibbert's edit. of Caxton's translation of the *Metamorphoses* (Roxb. Club, 1819, Introd.)].

<sup>3</sup> B. ii. Introd. St. [iv. edit. Morris, 1869, p. 79.]

It was not, however, solely from an unmeaning and a wanton spirit of refinement, that the fashion of resolving everything into allegory so universally prevailed. The same apology may be offered for the cabalistical interpreters both of the classics and of the old romances. The former, not willing that those books should be quite exploded which contained the ancient mythology, laboured to reconcile the apparent absurdities of the pagan system to the Christian mysteries, by demonstrating a figurative resemblance. The latter, as true learning began to dawn, with a view of supporting for a while the expiring credit of giants and magicians were compelled to palliate those monstrous incredibilities by a bold attempt to unravel the mystic web which had been woven by fairy hands, and by showing that truth was hidden under the gorgeous veil of Gothic invention.

[V.

## Dissertation on the Seven Sages.

BY THOMAS WRIGHT, M.A., F.S.A.<sup>1</sup>

HE romance of the *Seven Sages* is one of the most remarkable of the mediæval collections of stories, and belongs to the same class as the celebrated *Thousand and One Nights* of the Arabs, in which one simple story is employed as a means of stringing together a multitude of subsidiary tales. Its form would at once lead us to look for its origin in the East; and it is interesting to us, because we have materials which enable us to trace distinctly its history throughout its migration from distant India to Western Europe. The task of tracing this history was first executed by a French orientalist, M. Loiseleur Deslongchamps, in an excellent *Essai sur les Fables Indiennes, et sur leur Introduction en Europe*, published in 1838. M. Paulin Paris has also published recently a very learned and valuable *Etude sur les différents Textes, imprimés et manuscrits, du Roman des Sept Sages*.

The title of the Indian romance was *Sendabad*, and it appears to have been composed at a very remote, though unknown period. The Arabian historian, Massoudi, who died in A.D. 956 (345 of the hegira), says that this book was composed by an Indian philosopher named Sendabad, who was the contemporary of a king named Courou; and it appears that, in Massoudi's time, there existed a translation of it in Arabic or Persian. Two oriental writers, cited by M. Loiseleur Deslongchamps, state that the book of Sendabad was composed under

<sup>1</sup> [This essay was originally printed in the Percy Society's Series, and is now republished, with Mr. Wright's sanction, from a copy revised by himself.]

the Persian dynasty of the Arsacides, which began 256 years before Christ, and ended towards A.D. 223. From this Indian original were derived three works founded on the same plot, but differing a little in the details: the Arabian romance of *The King, his Son, the Favourite, and the Seven Viziers*, which was translated into English by Jonathan Scott, in 1800; the Hebrew romance of the *Parables* of Sendabar; and the Greek romance of *Syntipas* (Συντίπας). In each of these a young prince, falsely accused by one of the wives of the king, his father, of having attempted to offer her violence, is defended by seven sages or philosophers, who relate a series of stories calculated to show the malice and perversity of the female sex and the danger of a condemnation without proofs.

The date of the formation of these three romances is unknown. The Hebrew version of the *Parables* of Sendabar (the last letter of which word has probably arisen from confounding the two Hebrew letters *ר* and *ר*) is, at least, as old as the end of the twelfth century. The Greek romance of *Syntipas* is preceded by a metrical prologue, which informs us that it was the work of a certain Andreopulus, who avows himself a worshipper of Christ, and declares that he translated it from the Syriac. It is here also stated, that a Persian named Mousos was the first author of the work, from which Silvestre de Sacy conjectured that a person of the common Saracenic name of Mousa had translated *Sendabar* into Arabic or Persian.

The Hebrew romance, which is preserved in manuscript, appears to have been the original from which a monk of the abbey of Haute-Selue, or Haute-Seille, in the bishopric of Nancy in France, named John, composed early in the thirteenth century the prose Latin romance, entitled, *Historia septem sapientum Romæ*, through which this work was communicated to nearly all the languages of Western Europe. A trouvère of the thirteenth century, named Herbert or Hebert, made a very free translation, or rather imitation, in French verse of this Latin romance, in which he has added several stories, and altered considerably such stories of the original as he has retained. This version is best known by the title of *Dolopathos*, which is here the name of the king whose son is the hero of the poem. A careful edition of the French text of *Dolopathos* has been recently (1856) given to the public by MM. Charles Brunet and Anatole de Montaiglon, who have shown clearly that the author of this French poem, Herbert, lived during the reign of Louis VIII. and that it was written between the years 1222 and 1225. Another trouvère, whose name is unknown, composed also, in the thirteenth century, a French metrical romance of the *Seven Sages*, which is a close version of the Latin romance; and this was also translated into French prose before the end of the same century.<sup>1</sup> The English

<sup>1</sup> The anonymous French metrical romance was published in Germany in 1836 by Professor Keller, with a very learned introduction in German. The prose romance, with large extracts from the romance of *Dolopathos*, was published by M. Le Roux de Lincy in 1838.

versions, of which there were several, were evidently founded upon these French versions. The Latin romance was also translated at a subsequent period into German, Dutch, and Danish.<sup>1</sup> In Italy, in the sixteenth century, appeared an imitation of this romance, under the title of the *Adventures of Prince Eraſtus* (*Li compaſſionevoli avvenimenti d'Eraſto*), which was evidently founded upon the Latin work of John of Haute-Selve, although pretended to be taken from the Greek. The adventures of Eraſtus were translated successively into French, Spanish, and English.

Having thus briefly enumerated the different known versions of this singular romance, it will probably not be thought uninteresting to give a comparative analysis of the three earliest versions, beginning with the Greek *Συντίπας*.<sup>2</sup>

According to this romance, a king of Persia, named Cyrus, had seven wives, none of whom had borne him any children. But after having long offered up his prayers to the deity, a son was born to him; and when the young prince had passed his infancy, he was placed under several successive masters, without making any progress in learning. The king thereupon resolved to entrust the education of his son to a philosopher named Syntipas, who undertook to make him master of every part of philosophy within six months. Syntipas caused a large house to be built, and had painted upon the walls of the apartments representations of all the subjects which he wished to impress upon the mind of the royal youth. When everything was ready, he placed his pupil in his new residence, and the young prince made such rapid progress, that at the end of the six months he knew all that the philosopher had undertaken to teach him. On the eve of the day fixed for the completion of his education, the king reminded Syntipas of his promise, and the latter prepared to take the prince to court on the morrow. But during the night, the philosopher consulted the stars, and saw with consternation that the life of the prince would be in danger, if he were carried back to his father within seven days after the period agreed upon. The philosopher informs his scholar of his danger, and they agree that the young prince shall go to court the next day, but that he shall keep strict silence during the seven days, while Syntipas hides himself to avoid the king's anger. The youth accordingly repairs to the palace, but, to the astonishment of his father and the courtiers, he remains dumb to all the questions that are put to him. One of the wives of Cyrus begs to be intrusted with the prince, takes him into her apartment, and employs prayers and caresses to engage him to break his silence. Finding all her endeavours useless, she tries to tempt his ambition, and undertakes to effect the death of his father, and place

<sup>1</sup> On the editions of these translations, printed in the fifteenth century, see Keller's *Introduction to the Roman des Sept Sages*.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek text was printed at Paris in 1828 by Boissonade. It may be observed that there is a modern Greek version, which is of little importance in the history of the romance.

him upon the throne, if he will promise to marry her. The prince, in his indignation, is unable to restrain his tongue : "Learn," cried he, "that I cannot answer thee at present, but in seven days I will." The woman, perceiving her own danger, now determines to effect the ruin of the prince : she tears her garments, scratches her face, and hurries to the king to complain of the brutal treatment she has received from his son. Cyrus, in his anger, condemns the prince to death. At the court were seven councillors or philosophers, who enjoyed the monarch's confidence ; and when they heard of the king's judgment, they could not believe the prince guilty, but suspected some treachery on the part of his accuser. They, therefore, resolved each to pass a whole day with the king to endeavour to moderate his anger, fearing that Cyrus might afterwards repent of the death of his son, and look upon them as responsible for it. Each tells the king a story.<sup>1</sup>

I. The philosopher, whose lot it was to take the first day, immediately repaired to the palace, and prostrating himself before the king, said "Sire, a king ought to come to no determination, until he is well assured of the truth, as is evinced by the following story." He then relates to him how a king, who was passionately fond of women, saw one day a lady of surpassing beauty, with whom he fell violently in love. That he might enjoy the object of his passion, he sent the husband on a distant mission, and in his absence visited the lady, and made a declaration of his love, but all his prayers were useless. The lady represented to him the unworthiness of his conduct, and the king, unable to overcome her resistance, retired, unconscious that he had dropped his ring. The husband, on his return, finds the ring near the bed, and recognizes it as that of the king. Convinced that the prince has penetrated into the conjugal chamber, he resolves to abstain, in future, from all commerce with his wife. At length the lady, from whom her husband had concealed his suspicions, and who, on her part, did not venture to mention to him what had taken place, hurt at his coldness, complains to her father and brothers, who cited the husband before the king. "Sire," they said, "we have given to this man a field on condition that he should sow it, and he leaves it uncultivated : let him return it to us, or let him cultivate it as he ought." "What is thy answer to this complaint?" said the king. "Sire," replied the husband, "what they have stated is true. For a time I cultivated the field which they had given me, but one day I perceived in it the track of a lion, and since that I have not dared to approach it." "Fear nothing," said the king ; "the lion,

---

<sup>1</sup> This introduction is nearly the same in the Hebrew and Arabic stories, with the exception that in the *Parables* of Sendabar, where the scene is placed in India, the king, named Bibur, chooses for the preceptors of his son seven philosophers, who have almost all names corrupted from the Greek, among which we recognize those of Apollonius, Lucian, Aristotle, and Hippocrates. Sendabar, the chief of the philosophers, is finally charged with the education of the prince. In the history of the *Seven Viziers*, no names are given to these personages.

it is true, entered into thy field, but he did no harm, and will not return again ; cultivate it as before.”<sup>1</sup>

II. After having shown from this story that we must not always trust in appearances, the first philosopher tells another, in order to put the king on his guard against the malice of womankind. A merchant, curious to know what passed in his house during his absence, bought a parrot, which had the quality of telling all it had seen and heard. The merchant put it in a cage, and ordered it to watch the behaviour of his wife, while he was occupied abroad with his business. As soon as the merchant left his home, the parrot saw that a lover came to visit the lady ; and he informed the merchant of this circumstance on his return. From this moment, the latter showed so much coldness towards his wife, that she was convinced he had been made acquainted with her conduct, though she knew not how. A female slave, who was in the confidence of her mistress, and was very cunning, guessed that the parrot was the informer, and they consulted together to find an expedient to destroy the bird’s credit, which was done as follows : when night was come, and the parrot appeared to be asleep, the lady hung the cage beside a hand-mill, and suspended over it a large sponge, full of water ; then rapidly turning the mill, she flashed a light at intervals before the bird which, dazzled by the light and confounded by the noise, and soaked with the water that kept running down from the sponge, imagined it had been a violent storm. When he made his report to the merchant the next morning, the latter, knowing that it had been a calm night, no longer believed what the parrot told him, and became reconciled with his wife.<sup>2</sup>

III. These two stories changed the determination of Cyrus, who now resolved not to put his son to death. But the king’s wife, next day, again decides him to order his son’s execution, by relating a rather foolish story (found also in the Hebrew and Arabic) of a fuller who was drowned in attempting to save the life of his son. The king is thus made, during the seven days, to change his intention twice every day.

IV. At the moment when the prince is being led to execution, the second philosopher presents himself, and recites a very unmeaning story of two cakes, to show the king the rashness of his judgment.

V. He then tells the following story, to show that a woman’s wit in

<sup>1</sup> The story is found with very little variation in the *Parables* of Sendabar and in the *Seven Viziers*. In the former, instead of the ring, the king forgets his cane. In the latter, the prince, who has supped with the lady, performs his ablutions before his departure, and leaves his ring under the cushion of the sofa. The same tale is found in a Turkish collection, entitled *Abjâib-el-Measer*, from which Cardonne translated it under the title of *La Pantoufle du Sultan*, in the *Mélanges de Littérature Orientale*. [A very similar story occurs in *A. C. Mery Talys* (1525), No. v. in Decker and Webster’s *Northward Ho*, 1607, and in the Novels of Malaspini, 1609.]

<sup>2</sup> This story, which is found in the *Parables* of Sendabar and in the *Seven Viziers*, occurs also in the *Thousand and One Knights*, and is repeated so frequently under different forms in the literature of the middle ages, that it is hardly necessary to give references.

contriving tricks is inexhaustible. A married woman had an officer for her lover. One day, when her husband was absent, the lover sent his slave to know if he might visit her, and the slave, being young and handsome, pleased the lady, which led her to commit a new act of infidelity. The officer, tired of waiting, and impatient to see his mistress, went himself to her house, and reached the door at the moment she was indulging her new passion. She hastily concealed the slave in her inner apartment, and then received her lover with all her ordinary tenderness, and was proceeding to further criminalities, when they were disturbed by the sudden arrival of her husband. How to escape, it was not easy to see. If she put the officer into the inner chamber, he would find his slave, and discover the faithlessness of his mistress; by the other door, he would meet her husband. The lady suddenly thought of an expedient: "Take your sword in your hand," she said, "pretend to be in a violent rage, load me with abuse, and rush out into the street, without speaking to my husband." The officer did as he was told, and the husband, terrified and alarmed, inquired of his wife the cause of all this uproar. "That officer," she replied, "came here in pursuit of his slave, whom I have concealed in our inner room, to save him from his anger, and my refusal to deliver him threw him into the rage in which you saw him." The credulous husband immediately ran into the street to watch the officer, and when he found that he was no longer to be seen, he came back, and said to the slave, "You may now go out in peace, for your master is out of sight."<sup>1</sup>

VI. These two stories saved the life of the prince during the second day, but the next morning the queen by the following tale procured a new order for his execution. A young prince goes a hunting, attended by one of the councillors of the king, his father. In the ardour of the chase, he becomes separated from his followers, and meets with a lamia or ogres, who presents herself to him as a princess who had lost her way. He takes her up behind him, but he soon perceives his danger, and in his terror raises his eyes towards heaven, and exclaims, "Lord Christ, have pity on thy servant, and deliver him from the demon!" Immediately the lamia, darting from the horse, disappears under the earth, and the young prince hastens back in a state of agitation to his father's palace. The queen represents this adventure as a snare set for the young prince by the minister who accompanied him, and takes the opportunity of prejudicing Cyrus against his advisers.<sup>2</sup>

VII. The third philosopher now comes forward to counteract the queen, and tells the story of a sanguinary war, which arose between

<sup>1</sup> This story is found in the *Parables* of Sendabar, and in the *Seven Viziers*. We meet with it also in the Indian collection entitled *Hitopadësa*, which was compiled before the Mahomedan conquest, so that we trace it direct to an Indian origin. It is found in the *Decameron*, and is repeated over and over again in the collections of the middle ages. [A French translation of the *Hitopadësa* has been contributed by M. Lancelot to the *Bibliothèque Elzevirienne*, Paris, 1855.]

<sup>2</sup> This story is found in the two other versions, and occurs also in the *Thousand and One Nights*. In the *Parables* of Sendabar, instead of the lamia we have a female demon named *Schidah*.

two neighbouring countries on account of a bee-hive that had been stolen ; to show that great events often arise from small causes. In a second story, he again represents to the king the ingenuity of woman's malice. A man sent his wife to the market to buy rice. The merchant of whom she buys it is captivated by her good looks ; he tells her that rice is generally eaten with sugar, and offers to give her some gratuitously, if she will consent to gratify his desires. The woman requires that the sugar shall be first given to her ; and wrapping it up with the rice in a cloth, she intrusts it to the shop-boy, and follows the merchant into his apartment. In the meantime the lad takes the sugar and rice away, and puts an equal quantity of earth in its place. The woman takes away her parcel without examining it, and carries it to her husband, who is much astonished at finding nothing in it but earth. The woman at once perceives the trick which has been played upon her, but without being in the least disconcerted, she replies to her husband's enquiries, " I fell down in the market, and lost my money ; and I collected the earth from the spot where I fell, in the hope that by passing it through a sieve, the money would be found." The simple husband approves of what she had done, and loses his time in sifting the earth without finding his money.<sup>1</sup>

VIII. The king having again revoked his sentence, the queen returns next day to the attack with a singular story. A young prince departs for the court of a king, whose daughter he is to marry, accompanied by one of the ministers of the king, his father. On the road the minister, under a false pretext, leaves the prince near a spring, which has the power of changing those who drink of it into women, and returning home, announces to his father that he has been devoured by a lion. The young prince, left alone, drinks of the fatal spring, and immediately feels its effects. Fortunately he meets with a peasant, who agrees to become a woman in his place, on condition that his natural form shall be restored to him at the end of four months. The young prince repairs to the court of the king, whose daughter had been affianced to him, marries her, and eludes the fulfilment of his promise to the peasant. The guilty minister is put to death. The queen again blames the conduct of the councillors of Cyrus, and the order is given for the execution of his son.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This story is found in the Indian collection translated into Persian under the title of the *Tooti-nameh*, (the tales of a parrot,) as well as in the *Parables of Sendabar*, and in the *Seven Viziers*. It occurs in the *Directorium Humane Vitæ* of John of Capua, fol. E 3, v<sup>o</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Parables of Sendabar*, this story makes part of that of the prince and the lamia. The prince, after being changed into a woman, passes the night near the enchanted fountain, which turns men into women, and women into men ; and in the morning he meets in the forest a troop of young girls, to whom alone he discloses his rank, and the misfortune which had happened to him. By their advice, he drinks again of the fountain, and a second metamorphosis takes place. In the *Seven Viziers*, the metamorphosed prince meets with a genius, who leads him to another spring, by the virtue of which his sex is restored to him. This is, perhaps, the correct version of the story, which is rendered confused in the Greek. The notion of springs which change the sexes of those who drink of them, is taken from the ancients.

IX. The philosopher, whose turn it is to save the prince's life on the fourth day, begins with a singular tale, the object of which is to show the danger of acting inconsiderately. The son of a king laboured under a deformity which it is not easy to express in English, *ὴν δὲ αἰτός παχὺς ἄμα καὶ εὐμεγέθης, ὡς ἐκ τοῦ πάχους μὴ καθορᾶσθαι τὰ τοῖτον αἰδοῖα.* One day that he was at the bath, the keeper of the bath, when he saw him, shed tears at the thought that the heir of the throne would be incapable of having heirs. The young prince asked him why he wept, and the other told him his reflections. "Know," said the prince, "that my father is going to marry me, but having conceived the same doubts that you now feel, I desire, in order to know if I ought to marry, to converse with a woman, and I beg that you will find me one." The keeper of the bath, greedy of gain, conceived the unfortunate idea of offering his own wife, believing his honour in perfect security with a man like the prince. He soon discovered his error; a secret witness of the interview between his wife and the prince, he saw things which he was far from expecting, and in despair put an end to his own life.<sup>1</sup>

X. This philosopher, as usual, follows up his argument with a tale illustrative of the perversity of the female sex. A young wife parts with her husband, who is going on a distant journey, and they swear mutual fidelity. On the day fixed for his return, she goes to meet him, but he does not arrive. On the way a young man sees her, and is struck with her beauty; he makes proposals to her, which she rejects with indignation. Mortified at the refusal of his offer, the young man goes to an old procuress, who promises to assist him. She makes a cake, in which she puts a large quantity of pepper, and she gives this to a bitch which she takes with her to the house of the young woman whom she intends to deceive. The pepper soon brings tears to the eyes of the bitch, and the young woman asks why it cries. The old hag is ready with her answer: "This bitch is my daughter. A young man was desperately in love with her; she would not listen to him; her lover cursed her in his despair, and she was immediately changed into a bitch, and now she laments her fault." The young wife, terrified at the prospect thus offered to her, tells the old woman what had passed between herself and the young man, and declares that she is willing to receive him. The old woman hastens to seek the lover, but cannot find him. In her embarrassment, she determines to take to the lady the first man she meets, which happens to be her husband, who accepts the proposal, and is surprised at being conducted to his own house. His wife, hiding her surprise, loads him with reproaches, and tells him that she intended to prove him, and that she finds he is unworthy of her love. The poor husband excuses himself as well as he can, and succeeds, not without difficulty, in appeasing her anger.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This story is taken from one in the *Hipotadesa*. It was preserved in the mediæval *Seven Sages*, and will be found in the English text as edited by me for the Percy Society.

<sup>2</sup> This story, with the exception of the conclusion, is found in the Indian collec-

XI. The wife of Cyrus, finding that the fourth philosopher had also been successful, threatens to poison herself if the prince is not put to death, and tells the king he will have the same fate as a wild boar, of which she relates a very ridiculous tale. This wild boar, which was in the habit of eating the figs that fell from a certain fig-tree, found one day a monkey in the tree. The monkey throws him down some figs, which he finds much better than those he had been accustomed to eat. The expectation of receiving others makes him remain so long in the same attitude that the veins of his neck burst, and he dies of suffocation.<sup>1</sup>

XII. Next day the fifth philosopher comes to intercede for the prince. He begins by showing Cyrus the danger of hasty judgments, in the story of a king's officer who, imagining that his dog had devoured the child entrusted to its charge, kills the animal in a moment of anger, and then, finding that the blood with which the faithful dog was covered was that of a serpent which it had slain in defending the life of the child, abandons himself to unavailing grief.<sup>2</sup>

XIII. The same philosopher tells a second story of the never-failing theme of the perversity of the other sex. A man, who was given to the most licentious habits, having heard of the beauty of a lady who lived in his neighbourhood, had the impudence to introduce himself into her house, and to make an attempt upon her virtue; but she rejected his proposals with indignation. His desires were only increased by this repulse, and he went to an old procuress, and offered her a very considerable sum of money if she would betray the lady into his power. The old woman said, "Go to the market, present yourself to the husband of this woman, and buy of him a mantle, which you must bring to me." The man did so, and she burnt the mantle in three places, and took it with her to the house, on a visit to the woman whose husband had sold it, and contrived to conceal it under the pillow of his bed. At dinner-time, the husband comes home weary with his labour, and seeks repose in his bed. In arranging his pillow he finds the mantle, recognizes it, and believing his wife unfaithful, he ill-treats her, and turns her out of doors, and she seeks refuge among her relatives. The old woman

tion, entitled *Vrihat-Kathâ*; and it was exceedingly popular in the middle ages. See my *Latin Stories*, edited for the Percy Society, 1842, pp. 16 and 218; and *Anecdota Literaria*, 1844, p. 1. The dénouement of the story in *Syntipas*, which is the same in the *Parables* of Sendabar and in the *Seven Viziers*, appears to be borrowed from a tale in the *Tooti-nameh*, English translation, p. 62.

<sup>1</sup> The story of the monkey and the boar is found in the *Fables of Bidpai*. In the *Parables* of Sendabar, instead of the monkey, a man who is working in the field, seeing the boar, takes refuge in the fig-tree, and throws down the figs. The Latin romance of the *Seven Sages* gives the same version of the story, which is an additional proof of its being taken from the Hebrew. It is repeated in the English text I have edited, with rather a different dénouement.

<sup>2</sup> This story, which has been so popular in all ages, is found in the Indian collection of the *Panchatrantra*. It is found in the metrical English version of the *Seven Sages*, edited for the Percy Society. Our readers will remember the Welsh legend of Bedd-gelert.

hastens to visit her: "I know," she says, "what is the matter; a wicked sorcerer is the cause of the mischief, but I know a wise doctor who can set all right. Come directly to my house, and see him, and he will soon bring about a reconciliation with your husband." The poor woman yields to her advice; and the procuress brings the lover to her house the same evening, introduces him to the lady in a secret apartment, and he effects his purpose by force. After having fully satisfied his desires, the young man expresses his regret at having disturbed the peace of the family. "Be not uneasy on that account," said the old woman, "but follow my directions. Go to the market, and present yourself before the husband. He will certainly question you about the mantle. Tell him that this mantle, having been placed carelessly near the fire, was burnt in three places, and that you had employed an old woman to mend it. I will at that moment pass by, as if by accident; you shall abuse me, and I will confess that I have lost your mantle." This plot has a complete success; the husband, convinced of his mistake, begs his wife's pardon, and she, not without some difficulty, agrees to a reconciliation.<sup>1</sup>

XIV. The wife of King Cyrus again decides him to put his son to death, by a strange story, found in *Syntipas* and the *Parables of Sendabar*, of a robber who took refuge in a wood, and who managed to escape from the perils to which he was exposed by a lion and a monkey leagued together against him.

XV. Next day, the sixth philosopher tells two stories, in one of which, undoubtedly of eastern origin, a pigeon having after the harvest made a store of corn, which he had placed in the hole of a roof, agreed with his mate not to touch it during the summer. But the heat having dried up the grain, the pigeon imagined that his female had secretly stolen it, and killed her in a fit of rage. The humidity of autumn having again swelled the grain, the pigeon too late discovered his error.

XVI. The other story appears to be peculiar to *Syntipas*, and is not worth an analysis.

XVII. The queen, who is aware that the time is fast approaching when the king's son will be able to speak, again threatens to commit suicide if he is not immediately put to death, and prevails on the king to order his execution. The seventh philosopher now makes his appearance, and begins with a strange story to show the danger of acting hastily. A man had at his orders a demon, by means of whom he was enabled to know the future. Crowds of people came to consult him, and he gained great sums of money. One day the demon said to him, "I am going to leave you, but before I go, you may make three wishes, which shall be immediately gratified." The good man, after hesitating some time, ended by taking the advice of his wife. 'Η δὲ γυνὴ . . φησὶ . . οὐδὲν δύλο ἀγαπητικώτερον εἰς τοὺς

<sup>1</sup> This story was very popular in the middle ages, and was the story of a French fabliau. A tale, somewhat similar, is found in the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius.

ἀνθρώπους ἔστι, ἡ μόνον τὸ κοιμᾶσθαι ἄνδρα μετὰ γυναικός. Ζῆτησον οὖν τὸν Θεὸν πολλοὺς ὄρχεις γενέσθαι ἐν τῷ σώματί σου. The man followed his wife's advice, but his wish was granted more abundantly than he expected,—καὶ, ἀμα τῇ εὐχῇ αὐτοῦ, ὅλον τὸ σῶμα γέγονε μεστὸν καὶ νεφρῶν καὶ ὄρχεων. In his hurry to be relieved from the embarrassing effects of his wish, the man commits a blunder which it requires his third wish to repair, and he remains at last in the same situation as if he had no wishes at all. Καὶ ἀμα, . . . αἰτεῖται παρὰ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἐλευτερώθη τὸν ὄρχεων. ἔχασε δὲ μετὰ τούτων καὶ ἀπέρ εἶχεν ἀπὸ γενέσεως . . . ἡ δὲ φυσί . . . ζῆτησον τὸν Θεὸν τοὺς ἀπὸ γεννήσεος σου ὄρχεις λαβεῖν.<sup>1</sup>

XVIII. The seventh philosopher, in a second tale, makes a new attack upon the character of the ladies. A man had sworn never to rest or settle himself at home, until he had arrived at a knowledge of all the tricks and contrivances of the other sex. He went on his travels, and having made a considerable collection of all the artifices of women, and believing that he had fully effected his object, he determined to return home. Arriving at a place where a man was giving a great feast, he was admitted to it as a stranger. He takes his place at table, and during the repast he relates to the guests the object of his travels. The master of the house, for motives which are not very clearly stated, tells his wife to take the stranger with her, and to serve him a collation alone in a private apartment. When she is alone with him, she asks him if he thinks he has collected all the malicious inventions of which women are capable, and he replies that he is certain of it. "Let us see, then," says she, "if you have the following in your repertory. A man, married to an honest and virtuous woman, was always attacking the character of the fair sex. 'Do not abuse them all,' said his half, 'but only those who are wicked.' 'All,' replied the husband. 'Don't say that,' she answered, 'since you have not been unfortunate in this respect.' 'If I had one of those bad women,' said the man, 'I would cut off her nose.' His wife resolved to teach him more prudence. One day her husband said to her, 'I am going to-morrow to the fields; you will prepare my dinner, and bring it to me.' The woman hurried to the market, bought some fish, and scattered them here and there in the place where her husband was going to work. He, finding the fish, carried them home to his wife to be cooked. When she spread the table, the man asked for his fishes. 'What fishes?' said she. 'Those I found in my field,' replied the husband. The woman immediately called in her neighbours to witness the folly of her husband, who pretended to have caught fishes in a ploughed field. The man persists in his assertions; the neighbours laugh at him; he flies into a violent passion; and then they no longer

<sup>1</sup> I should not have ventured to give any account of this singular story, which occurs in the *Parables* of Sendabar and in the *Seven Viziers*, had it not been evidently the foundation of an early French fabliau, entitled *Les quatre souhaits Saint Martin*, which is even more indecent than the original. A similar story is found in the Indian *Pancha-tautra*; and a variety of analogous tales are met with, both in the east and in the west.

doubt that he is possessed by a devil, and they seize him and put him in bonds. The husband remained obstinate during three days, but at last, thoroughly weary of his captivity, he agreed that his wife was in the right, and she set him at liberty. 'Now,' said she, 'all that you have said is true enough; but as you pretended that if you had a naughty wife you would kill her, I thought I would give you a lesson.' " The stranger was thrown off his guard by this story; the lady, who was young and beautiful, made tender advances, and he was easily seduced; but at the moment that he was on the point of enjoying his supposed conquest, she set up a great cry, and called for help. The stranger hurried to his place at the table, terrified at seeing the guests crowding into the room to the assistance of their hostess. "What is the matter?" they all cried. "Nothing," said the lady, "this stranger nearly choked himself as he was eating, and I could not help crying out; but he is now recovered." The guests immediately left the room, and the lady said to the stranger, "Well! are the story I have told you, and the trick I have played, in your collection?" He was obliged to confess the impossibility of knowing all the wicked tricks of which the sex was capable; he threw his collection into the fire, returned home, and married.<sup>1</sup>

XIX. The life of the young prince is thus preserved till the eighth day, when he could speak without fear, and he told his father the cause of his silence. The king, overjoyed at his son's escape, called together his philosophers, and said, "If I had put my son to death within the seven days, who would have been chargeable with his death, myself, my son, or this woman?" The philosophers, however, gave unsatisfactory answers, and the young prince told the following story:—"A man, having invited several friends to dinner, sent his slave to buy milk. As she was returning home with her pot full of milk on her head, a kite passed over her, carrying a serpent in its claws. In its struggles, the serpent shed its venom, which fell into the pot. The slave, perfectly ignorant of what had happened, served the milk to the guests, and they were all poisoned." The prince asked the philosophers to whom this unfortunate event was to be imputed, and after a discussion among them, he resolved the question himself, by asserting that destiny alone was to be accused. He then told two stories, the object of which was to show the sagacity and good sense of children. The second of these merits to be recited.

XX. Three merchants visit together a country for affairs of commerce, and take up their lodging in the house of an old woman. Before going to the bath, they put their gold and silver in three purses, which they deposit in the hands of their hostess, strictly ordering her not to give them up unless all three ask for them together. At a short distance from the house, they find that they have forgotten a comb, and one of the party is sent back to fetch it. But,

---

<sup>1</sup> This story seems to be peculiar to *Syntipas*. Several tales, bearing a rather close analogy to it, were current in the middle ages.

instead of asking for the comb, he asks for the three purses of money, which the woman delivers into his hands, when she sees his two companions holding up their hands to show that he came with their assent; and he immediately runs away with his prize. The two merchants, missing their companion, return to the house, and learn what has taken place. They immediately cite their hostess before the judge, and obtain a judgment, by which she is ordered to make good their loss. The poor woman leaves the court in tears, and meets with a child, who enquires what is the matter with her, and offers to help her out of her difficulties, if she will give him money to buy nuts. She willingly assents to this, and he then tells her to return to the judge, to state that she is ready to restore the money, when the three merchants present themselves together, but that she will not give it to two of them without the third. The judge now gives a decision in favour of the woman, and learning that it was a child who had suggested to her this line of defence, he sent for the child, and appointed him master over the philosophers and rhetoricians.<sup>1</sup>

XXI. The prince next relates the story of a merchant, who succeeded in escaping from the hands of a number of rogues. A merchant who dealt in aromatic woods, having heard that this merchandise was rare in a certain city, and was there bought up at a very high price, made a bundle of all the wood he had of that kind, and set off with it towards the city alluded to. When he came to the town gates, he halted awhile, in hopes of gaining information as to the price at which he might offer his wood. In the course of the day, he met a female slave, belonging to one of the principal inhabitants of the city, and in answer to her questions, informed her of the nature of his merchandise. The slave immediately carried this information to her master, who was a very cunning man, and he collected all the aromatic wood he had, and threw it in the fire. The smell of this wood reached the merchant, who at first thought it was his own parcel which had taken fire, but he soon found that he was mistaken. Very early, next morning, he entered the town, and met the master of the slave, who was on the look-out for him, and who enquired what merchandise he was bringing for sale. "Aromatic wood," replied the merchant. "Aromatic wood!" cried his interrogator, "who could have advised you to bring wood of that description to our city? it is of so little value here, that it is in common use for fire-wood." "I have been told quite the contrary," said the merchant. "Whoever told it you, intended to deceive you," was the answer. The poor merchant was grievously mortified; and the rogue, pretending to take compassion upon him, said, "Come,

<sup>1</sup> I have met with this tale among the Latin stories of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but I cannot call to mind in what collection. It is found, a little varied in the details, in [one of the Old English Jeſt-books, and in] the *Nouveaux contes à rire*, Amsterdam, 1737, under the title *Jugement subtil du duc d'Offune contre deux Marchands*.

now, I will take your whole stock, and give you in exchange for it a dish filled with any merchandise you like." The merchant, stupefied by the information he had obtained from the stranger, was thrown off his guard, agreed to the bargain, and gave up his wood. He then went his way, and took up his lodgings at the house of an old woman, and accidentally inquired of her the price of aromatic wood. "It sells for its weight in gold," replied the old woman, "but let me warn you to mistrust the inhabitants of this town, for they are rogues, whose only delight it is to make strangers their dupes." Mortified beyond measure at receiving this information too late, the merchant goes out to take a walk round the town, and meeting with three men at work, he remains awhile to watch them. One of them, suddenly addressing him, proposes a discussion, on condition that the one who is conqueror in the dispute shall oblige the other to perform any task he likes. The merchant accepts the proposal; they enter upon the discussion; and, overcome by his adversary, he is condemned to drink up the water of the sea. While he is expostulating with his opponent, and trying to get out of the scrape, another of the three men who had lost one eye, and saw the merchant's eyes were of the same colour as his own, jumps up and says, "It is you who robbed me of my eye; come with me to the judge, that he may condemn you to restore the eye you have stolen." Fortunately, as they were dragging him away, they met the old woman with whom he lodged, who persuaded his persecutors to let him go till the next morning, and conducted him home. She there said to him, "I warned you that the people of this town would try to play you some trick; you did not pay proper attention, and have been made a victim. Now there is only one way to escape. All the rogues acknowledge as their master a man who surpasses them all in knavery: and at night they go to visit him, and each relates to him what he has done in the course of the day. You must go and disguise yourself like one of them, and mix secretly among them, taking the greatest care not to let them recognize you. The rogues who have made a dupe of you will come in their turns to consult the master; listen attentively to his answer, and impress it deeply on your memory; for the objections, which he will not fail to make to them, will furnish you with the means of eluding their snares." The merchant followed the old woman's advice, repaired to the spot indicated, and there saw, among the first who arrived, the man who had cheated him of his merchandise. This man relates to the master of the rogues his affair with the stranger. "Have you specified," said the master, "the kind of merchandise which you are to give him in exchange?" "No," replied the man. "In that case," continued the master, "you have committed a serious inadvertence, for suppose that he should require of you to give him a plate-full of fleas, that half of these fleas shall be males and the other half females, and that some of them shall be yellow, some black, and some blue, how would you procure them for him?" "Oh!" said the man, "this stranger is incapable of originating such an idea; if it comes to the

worst, I shall escape with the loss only of a plate of gold or silver." Next came the man who had overcome the merchant in the dispute, and told his story to the master. " You, also," said the latter, " have made a blunder ; for your adversary might say, ' I am ready to drink the waters of the sea, but begin by stopping up all the rivers and streams which run into it, after which I will fulfil my engagement.' You would be caught in your own trap." Last came the man with one eye, who told his master the trick he had played. " You have had no better luck than the others," said the master, " for the stranger may think of saying to the judge, ' The only means of knowing the truth is to take out an eye from each of our heads, and then weigh them ; if they are of the same weight, the complaint is just, and my opponent will only have to take away the eye which he claims ; but if either of the eyes be in the slightest degree heavier than the other, I demand that my opponent be punished, and be condemned to pay me damages and interest.' What would you do, if the stranger should make this proposal ? The worst that could happen to him would be to become blind of one eye, but you would become blind of both." " Such an idea could never enter into the merchant's head," replied the rogue. The assembly now separates, and the merchant returns to his lodging, having well impressed on his memory the three answers of the master of the rogues, which he uses next morning against the three men who had intended to make him their dupe, and he thus obliges them to pay him considerable sums of money to get out of the scrape.<sup>1</sup>

The king, thus convinced of the innocence and talents of his son, fends for his wife, who confesses her crime. Cyrus then demands of his councillors what punishment he shall inflict upon her. They vary in their opinions ; one proposes to cut off her feet and hands ; another, to open her alive, and tear out her heart ; a third, to cut off her tongue. The lady answers by relating a tale of a fox, to show that it is better to live mutilated than to die. The cruel proposals of the councillors are rejected by the prince, who suggests that the guilty woman should have her head shaved, be placed on an ass with her face turned towards the tail, and thus carried about the town, with two criers before her, to proclaim the nature of the crime for which she was so punished.<sup>2</sup>

The king is charmed with the wisdom of his son, and complimented his preceptor, who declares to him that he is indebted to the star which presided over the birth of the young prince for the rapidity of his progress, and he relates a story (found only in the Greek *Syntipas*), to prove the infallibility of astrological predictions,

<sup>1</sup> This story is found in *Syntipas* and in the *Parables* of Sendabar. Its moral is not very apparent. The incident of the eye has some analogy with the story of the pound of flesh in the *Merchant of Venice*.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Parables* of Sendabar, the young prince obtains the pardon of his enemy. In the *Seven Viziers*, she is thrown into the sea. The story of the fox is found only in *Syntipas* and the *Parables* of Sendabar.

and to show that the best education is thrown away upon a child born under an unpropitious star. The Greek romance ends with a conversation between the father and his son, in which the latter gives appropriate answers to a series of moral questions.

It will have been observed, in the course of the preceding analysis, that several of the stories in this collection were derived immediately from India, which gives support to the statement of Massoudi, that the book itself was originally composed in that country. The Greek and Hebrew versions resemble each other closely, and were no doubt taken from one original. Many circumstances join in showing that the Hebrew could not have been taken from the Greek. The similarity, we may say identity, of the name, and the fact that its scene is laid in India, seem to show that it was taken directly from the book mentioned by Massoudi. M. Loiseleur Deslongchamps was of opinion that the *History of the Seven Viziers* is a more modern edition, or rather version, of the one alluded to by the Arabian historian just mentioned. In fact, this last collection contains several stories which are not found in the Greek or Hebrew versions.

I. The first of these is told by one of the viziers. A sultan, in the course of his walks, one day saw a child that had been exposed, and, moved with compassion, ordered that it should be taken home and educated. When the child had become a young man, and his education was completed, the emperor made him the keeper of his treasure. One day he sent him to fetch some object which was in the chamber of his favourite concubine. Ahmed (for so the youth was named) entering suddenly into the chamber, surprised the favourite in the arms of a slave, but he pretended not to perceive them, and carried back to the sultan the object he wanted, without mentioning a word of what he had seen. The favourite, fearing that Ahmed would inform against her, lost no time in repairing to the sultan, and accused him of having attempted to offer her violence, and the prince in his anger determined at once to put his *protégé* to death. With this intention he called a slave, and said to him, "Go to such a house, and wait there till a man comes to you and says, 'Accomplish the orders of the sultan.' When this man presents himself, cut off his head, and place the head in a covered basket, which thou shalt give to a second messenger." The slave goes to the place assigned; and the sultan gives the first commission to Ahmed, who has not the slightest suspicion of the accusation which has been brought against him, or of the fate which awaits him. On his way he finds the slave, who is the accomplice of the favourite, drinking with his companions. The slave, who knows that Ahmed is acquainted with his criminal conduct, asks whither he is going, and tries to retain him, in the hope that the sultan would be irritated against him for his delay. Ahmed refuses, on account of the commission with which he is charged, and the slave offers to perform it for him. Accordingly, he repairs to the house indicated by Ahmed, which he enters, and addressing the man whom he finds waiting

there, says, “ Accomplish the orders of the sultan,” and in an instant his head is separated from his body. Ahmed himself, astonished that the slave does not return, follows him to the place where he had been sent, and receives from his executioner the basket which he is to carry to the palace. The sight of its contents leads to an explanation, and the guilty concubine is put to death.<sup>1</sup>

II. The story of a painter is related by the lady, to show the perversity of the men. A certain painter, who was of a very amorous disposition, fell in love with the portrait of a woman of surpassing beauty, and after many enquiries learnt that it was the portrait of a concubine of a vizier of Ispahan. He immediately left his home, and repaired to that city, where he made acquaintance with an apothecary, and learnt from him that the sultan held sorcerers in the greatest detestation, and that he caused them all to be buried alive in a cavern situated at some distance outside the walls. This information suggested to the mind of the painter a stratagem which he immediately put into effect. During the night he went to the vizier’s palace, and succeeded in introducing himself into the apartment where the lady was asleep. He drew his dagger, and made a slight wound on her hand, on which she awoke, and terrified at the sight of a stranger, whom she supposed to be a robber, in her chamber, she gave him a magnificent veil, adorned with pearls and precious stones, on condition that he should leave her uninjured. Next day the painter, in the disguise of a pilgrim, went to the sultan, and told him that the evening before, arriving at night-fall in the neighbourhood of Ispahan, he had been surrounded by four sorceresses, whom he had driven away by pronouncing the holy name of God; he added that he had struck one of them with his dagger on the hand, and that in her confusion and haste she had let fall a magnificent veil, which he had brought with him. The sultan at once recognized this as a present he had made to his vizier, and the latter confessed having given it to his concubine. She was brought forth, and the wound discovered on her hand; and the sultan, convinced of her guilt, ordered her instantly to be buried in the cavern. The painter went privately to the keeper of the cavern, and by means of a bribe obtained possession of the lady, and carried her home with him.<sup>2</sup>

III. The fifth vizier tells a story of a young man who, after hav-

<sup>1</sup> A story, bearing a general resemblance to the above, was current in the west of Europe from the thirteenth century downwards. It occurs as a religious fabliau, or *conte dévot*, under the title,—*D’un roi qui voulut faire brûler le fils de son sénéchal* (see Legrand d’Aussy, *Fabliaux*, tom. v. p. 56); it forms the ninety-eighth chapter of the *Gesta Romanorum*; and it appears in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, and in the *Novelle* of Giraldi Cinthio.

<sup>2</sup> This story is of Indian origin, and will be found with some variations in an Indian poem, analysed in the *Quarterly Oriental Magazine* of Calcutta, June, 1827. I do not recollect any story closely resembling it in the Christian medieval collections, but it of course bears an analogy to the oft-recurring incident of ladies being thrown into a sleep resembling death, in order that they may be buried and then carried off by their lovers. This is the incident on which is built the plot of the tale of *Romeo and Juliet*.

ing wasted all his fortune, was obliged to gain his living by the occupation of a porter. One day a venerable old man offered to take him into his service, adding, "We are ten old men who live together in the same house, and we have need of some one to wait upon us. I would merely warn you, when you see us groan and weep, not to ask any questions." The young man observed with the greatest attention the condition thus imposed upon him, and rendered faithful service to the old men who, in course of time, died one after the other, until he who had hired the youth was the only one left. When his last moments approached, his servant ventured to ask him to satisfy his curiosity, and he said, "My son, I have always loved you, and I feared least you might incur the same lot as my own. Take care, above all things, that you never open the door which you see there." When he had said this the old man breathed his last. The young man, now master of the house, gave way to his curiosity, and opened the forbidden door. After proceeding along a passage of considerable length, he found himself on the sea-shore, where a great white eagle suddenly seized upon him, and carried him over the waves to a distant island. He was there met by young damsels, who conducted him to their queen, who made him her husband. "My lord," she said to him "all that is here belongs to you, but beware that your curiosity never leads you to open the door you see there, or you will bitterly repent of it." The young man passed seven months in pleasure and rejoicing; at the end of which time his curiosity got the better of his discretion: he opened the door, and again found himself in a long passage which led him to the sea-shore; and the same eagle seized upon him, and carried him over the waters to his own house, where he was left a prey to the most poignant regret.<sup>1</sup>

IV. The lady next tells the story of a merchant, who had a very handsome wife, of whom he was so jealous that he kept her always closely shut up. One day, the son of the sultan, passing that way, saw the lady, who was enjoying the air on the terrace of her house, and was enchanted with her beauty. He tried to obtain entrance into the house, but in vain; upon which he sent her a letter fixed on the point of an arrow. This was favourably received, and he soon afterwards sent her another letter, containing a key, and informing her that it belonged to the lock of a coffer in which he intended to introduce himself into the house. The son of the sultan then went to his father's vizier, and taking him into his confidence, prevailed with him to go to the merchant, and beg him, as a great favour to the prince, to receive into his house a coffer filled with objects of value, which he wished to place in safety. The stratagem succeeded; for the merchant, flattered by this mark of consideration, was far from objecting. The prince thus enjoyed the society of his mistress dur-

<sup>1</sup> This is the history of the Third Calender in the *Arabian Nights*. M. Loiseleur Deslongchamps refers, for the proof of its Indian origin, to stories in the *Vrikhat-Kathā* (*Quarterly Oriental Magazine of Calcutta*, January and June, 1835), and to the *Hūtopadeśa* (Wilkins's translation, p. 129).

ing seven days, at the end of which time the sultan, having asked for his son, the vizier sent a hasty message to the merchant to say that he was in immediate want of the coffer which had been intrusted to his care. The young prince was walking in the inner court of the house with his mistress, when the slaves came to fetch the coffer, and in his hurry to conceal himself, the lid was imperfectly fastened, so that in passing out of the house it sprang open, and the merchant discovered the trick which had been played upon him. In his mortification and despair, he divorced his wife, and resolved never to marry again.<sup>1</sup>

V. The following story is told by the sixth vizier. A young married lady, whose lover has been arrested and committed to prison, makes pressing solicitations for his delivery to the officer of the police, the cadi, the vizier, and the governor of the town, who are all charmed with her beauty, and make proposals, to which she readily listens, giving to each (unknown to the others) a rendezvous at her own house. As they arrive, she shuts them up successively in a cupboard divided into compartments, pretending that she hears her husband coming, and in the sequel runs away in company with her lover. The husband, on his return, hears the voices from the cupboard which he causes to be carried before the sultan; and being opened in his presence, the unlucky officers come forth covered with shame.<sup>2</sup>

VI. Another tale, related by the lady, is that of a poor woman accused of having stolen the collar of a queen; she is thrown into prison, and treated with the greatest severity until, fortunately, the sultan perceives one day a magpie holding the collar in its claws; when, perceiving at once the real thief, he causes the unfortunate woman to be set at liberty.

VII. The last of the stories of the *Seven Viziers*, not found in *Syntipas* or the *Parables of Sendabar*, is the following:—There was once a princess, named Rumta, who was so skilful in horsemanship and in throwing the javelin, that she declared she would marry no one but the prince who should vanquish her. Several had undertaken the task, but without success. Bharam, prince of Persia, passionately in love with Rumta, had failed by a stratagem of the princess who, when she saw that she had to deal with a powerful adversary, had raised her visor to dazzle her lover by the *éclat* of her beauty. Bharam now in his turn had recourse to stratagem. In the disguise

<sup>1</sup> This tale was known to the mediæval *conteurs*. It is found under the title of *La Façon qu'une Juifve fut convertie à la foi de Jésus Christ par la poursuite amoureuse d'un jeune Romain*, in the *Comptes du Monde avantageux*, Paris, 1582; and in *Les délices de Verboquet le généreux*, Paris, 1623.

<sup>2</sup> This story is found in Sanscrit (in the *Vrikhatkathâ*), in Persian, and in Arabic (in the *Thousand and One Nights*), with this difference that the lady is there represented as a virtuous woman, who takes similar means of exposing her importunate suitors. It appears in this, evidently its original shape, in an early French fabliau, entitled, *De la dame qui attrapa un prêtre, un prévôt, et un foretier* (Le Grand d'Aussy, tom. iv. p. 246), and is found in an early English metrical tale, printed by Mr. Halliwell, among the *Minor Poems of Lydgate*, p. 107, under the title of *The Tale of the lady Prioress and her three Suitors*.

of an old man, his face concealed in a great white beard, he presented himself where the princess was passing, and asked one of her ladies to marry him, offering to give some rich jewels to the one who would agree to his proposal. "I will give my wife a kiss," said he; "and then I will be immediately divorced from her." The princess, amused at this singular proposal, ordered one of her ladies to accept it; and the same scene was repeated several days in succession, the pretended old man giving always a rich present of jewels to the lady who married him. At length Rumta herself takes a fancy to become, in her turn, the wife of the old man. Bharan, so soon as the marriage has taken place, throws off his disguise, and the princess resigns herself to her lot.<sup>1</sup>

Having thus analysed the Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic versions of this singular collection of stories, we come to the Latin *Historia septem sapientum Romæ*, which appears to have been translated directly from the Hebrew, and which served as the groundwork of all the other mediæval versions. The translator has varied from his original, both in the names and in some of the stories, as will be easily seen by the following brief analysis. The hero of the story is here called Dioclesian, as in the English romance. He is the son of an emperor of Rome, named Pontianus, and after his mother's death is entrusted to the care of seven sages, who educate him in a retired spot, at some distance from the city. The young prince passes sixteen years in this retreat, and makes extraordinary progress in the sciences. In the meantime the emperor is resolved to take a second wife, and marries the daughter of the King of Castile, who conceives the greatest hatred for the young prince, although she has never seen him; and at her instigation the emperor sends orders to the seven sages, on pain of death, to bring him to court on the festival of Pentecost, then approaching. The sages consult the stars, and they discover by their astrological knowledge that, if they take home the prince on the day appointed, he will perish *mala morte*, the first word he speaks; and that, if they disobey the emperor's orders, they will have their heads cut off. The prince, also, has consulted the stars, and finds that, if he can abstain from speaking during the seven days following the day appointed for his appearance at his father's court, his life will be saved. His teachers undertake to preserve him from harm during the seven days. Dioclesian accordingly repairs to the palace of his father, who is greatly astonished at finding his son dumb. The humour of the queen undergoes a change, and she suddenly becomes amorous of the young prince, persuades the emperor to entrust him to her charge, and makes advances which the prince resists, declaring his sentiments towards her in writing.

---

<sup>1</sup> This story is also found in Sanscrit. It has an evident analogy with the classic legend of Hippomenes and Atalanta, which appears in the middle ages clothed in a very Gothic form. Somewhat similar stories are found in the romances of the Northern and Teutonic peoples.

Furious at her repulse, she disfigures her person, and accuses the youth of having attempted to offer her violence ; whereupon the emperor orders his archers to take him immediately to the gibbet. But the execution is delayed at the representation of the sages, and Dioclesian is thrown into prison.

I. When the queen is alone with her husband at night, she tells him the story of an old and beautiful pine, which the master of a garden causes to be cut down, in order to preserve a weak and ill-formed sprout. She says, that the lot of the old tree will be that of the emperor, and prevails with him to give directions for the execution of his son next morning.<sup>1</sup>

II. The first wise man, named Pantillas (Paucillas ?) persuades the emperor again to countermand his orders, by telling the tale of a knight, who slew the greyhound which had preserved the life of his child from a serpent.<sup>2</sup>

III. At night the queen again changes her husband's intentions, by relating the story of a boar, which was so terrible that it killed all who passed through the wood where it lodged ; and the emperor ordered it to be announced throughout his empire, that whoever would slay the boar should receive as a reward his daughter in marriage. A young shepherd watched the moment, when the animal was over-gorged with eating fruit, approached it cautiously, and slew it with a knife. The queen adds, that the seven sages are only deceiving the emperor, in order to encompass more easily his death.<sup>3</sup>

IV. The second sage, named Lentulus, saves the prince's life by the following story, intended to shew how prone women are to deceive. An old knight had for his wife a young lady who, every night as soon as her husband was asleep, took the keys from under his pillow, and went to meet a young lover. The husband, waking one night, perceived that both his wife and his keys had vanished ; and, going to the door, he found it open. He immediately bolted the door inside, and took his station at the window to await the lady's return. As soon as she appeared he loaded her with reproaches, to which she replied only by the humblest supplications that he would open the door to her. This the knight obstinately refused, and told her that she might remain, to be exposed on the pillory, which was, in that country, the punishment of all who were found out of their houses after a certain hour of the night. The lady, finding that all her entreaties were ineffectual, threatened her husband that she

<sup>1</sup> In the English romance of the *Seven Sages* this story appears also as the queen's first tale. In my text the tree is an apple-tree ; in Weber's text it is a "pin-note-tree."

<sup>2</sup> This is the twelfth story in *Syntipas*, and was a very popular one during the middle ages. In our text of the English *Seven Sages*, the first sage is named Baucillas ; in Weber's text the name is printed Bancillas.

<sup>3</sup> This story appears to be taken immediately from the *Parables* of Sendabar. Its form in *Syntipas*, where it is the eleventh story, is different. See before. M. Loiseleur De Longchamps thinks the writer had in his mind the old classic legend of the boar of Erymanthus.

would drown herself, and instantly took up a large stone and threw it into the well. It was dark, and the knight imagined that his wife had thrown herself into the water. He immediately opened the door, and ran to the well, whilst his lady slipped into the house, and locked the door against him. The knight now prayed for admision as urgently as the lady had done before, and with as little success. She went to bed, while he was seized by the watch, and in due course condemned to the pillory.<sup>1</sup>

V. The queen again prevails upon her husband to order his son to be executed by the following story of a father who sacrificed himself for his children. A knight, who had two daughters and a son, having entirely dissipated his fortune, penetrated with his son, during the night, into the tower which contained the treasures of the Emperor Octavian, and carried away a considerable quantity of gold. On the morrow the keeper of the treasure discovered the theft, and, perceiving a hole in the wall, placed under it a great vat filled with pitch and glue, and concealed it in such a manner that it could not be seen by any one entering through the hole. Some time after this the old knight, having spent all the gold he had stolen, returned to the tower, and fell into the snare. When he saw that he had no chance of escape, he begged his son to cut off his head, in order that he might not be known. The young man obeyed him with bitter lamentations, and carried away the head, which he concealed in a ditch. In the morning the body was taken out of the vat, drawn through the city, and finally hung on a gibbet; and the emperor gave strict orders to the officer entrusted with the execution, to take notice if they heard lamentations in any house by which the body might pass. As was expected, when the body came by the house of the knight, his daughters burst into cries of loud grief; but their brother, not in the least disconcerted, inflicted a severe wound on his own body; and when the guards entered the house, he said that the lamentations of his sisters were caused only by the accident which had befallen him. The queen pointed out the unworthy conduct of the son, who threw his father's head into a ditch, instead of

<sup>1</sup> This story, which was very popular during the middle ages, was taken from the *Disciplina Clericalis* of Petrus Alfonus, [printed in 1827]. It occurs as a fabliau, is inserted in the Decameron, and reappears in a variety of forms. It is a singular proof of the long duration of the popularity of such stories, that within a few days [this was written in 1846] I have heard the same story told in a small country town, as having happened to one of the townsmen, then dead, who had a scolding unruly wife. She came home one night at an unseasonable hour, and he refused to admit her. They lived by the water-side; and, having threatened her husband that she would drown herself unless he opened the door, she went and seized a log of wood, and threw it into the river. The good man believed that she had put her threat into execution; and, unlocking the door, ran to the water-side. The wife immediately slipped into the house, locked the door after her, and left her husband to seek a lodging elsewhere. In our English versions this story is told by the third sage, who, in our text (as in the Latin) is named Lentulus; in Weber's text, Lentilioun. In both the English texts the second sage is Ancillas, or Ancilles.

burying it in a churchyard, and who suffered his body to be suspended on a gibbet.<sup>1</sup>

VI. The third sage, named in the Latin *Cato*, again saves the prince's life by relating the story of the magpie which discloses to its master the infidelities of his wife who in revenge casts discredit on it by the stratagem already related in the second story of *Syntipas*; and the husband in his anger puts the bird to death. The emperor is again convinced by this story, that the words of a woman are not to be trusted.<sup>2</sup>

VII. The queen next tells a story of a king who was struck with blindness from heaven, to punish him for the bad government of seven sages, in whom he had placed all his confidence. By the advice of a child, named Merlin, the king cuts off the heads of the seven sages, and recovers his sight.<sup>3</sup>

VIII. The fourth sage, named Malaquedrac, tells the story of a young woman married to an old knight, and in love with a priest. Wishing, before she yields herself to the priest, to try the patience of her husband, she causes a tree in the garden, which is his particular favourite, to be cut down, kills his favourite dog, and overthrows the table, when he is treating his friends with a feast. The husband, under pretence of diminishing the superabundance of blood which torments her, bleeds her till she faints, and thus brings her to her reason. The sage praises the wisdom of the old knight, and advises the king to mistrust his queen.<sup>4</sup>

IX. The queen makes answer to this tale by one of the magician Virgil who, among other very wonderful performances, had by his art produced a fire which burnt always, and near which were two fountains; one warm, where the poor bathed; the other cold, of which they drank. Between the fire and the fountains was a statue, with an inscription on its forehead to the effect, that it would take

<sup>1</sup> This story appears to be a mediæval imitation of the legend of Rhampsinitus, king of Egypt, as told by Herodotus. A somewhat similar legend occurs in Pausanias, lib. ix. c. 37, relating to the treasury of Hyrcanus. It recurs, under various shapes, in the mediæval story-tellers from the thirteenth century to the sixteenth. In both the English texts of the *Seven Sages*, it is, as in the Latin, the third tale of the empress.

<sup>2</sup> This story is found in the Greek, Hebrew and Arabic versions of the romance; but it is only in the Hebrew that the merchant is made to kill his parrot, which seems to be a proof of the Latin version having been founded upon the Hebrew. The change of the parrot for a magpie was natural enough. Weber's English text also calls the bird a magpie; whilst the text printed by me restores the original name of a parrot or popinjay. It is the story of the fifth sage in the English texts.

<sup>3</sup> This story is found in the English versions, where it is the sixth story of the empress. It is of Indian origin, and is found in several of the Eastern collections of stories. Some of the incidents are identical with those of the common life of the Merlin of mediæval romance. In Weber's text of the English poem, the emperor is named Herod.

<sup>4</sup> This is also the story of the fourth sage in the English versions. He is called Malapas in our text. It also occurs as a fabliau; and is found, at a later period, among the *Contes ou nouvelles récréations et joyeux devis de Bonaventure des Périers*, num. cxxvii. [edit. Jacob, 1858, pp. 389-94.]

vengeance on the person who should strike it. One day a certain scholar, who could not imagine how a statue could take vengeance on any one who should strike it, gave it a great blow, on which the fire was instantly put out, and the fountains ceased to flow. Virgil had also built a tower, on the top of which he had placed as many "images" as there were provinces of the Roman empire. Each of these images or statues was made by magic, and held in its hand a bell, which it rang when the province it represented was preparing to revolt; and the Romans immediately took arms to punish it for its disobedience. Certain kings, who wished to throw off the yoke of the Romans, entered into a conspiracy to destroy the wondrous tower. They sent four knights to Rome, who succeeded in persuading the Emperor Octavian that all the treasures of Virgil were hidden under this tower. The emperor fell into the snare, and gave them authority to dig under the tower during the night; which they so managed, that the tower with its statues fell to the ground, and was destroyed. On the morrow the Roman populace, furious at the disaster, seized upon the person of their emperor, and, to punish him for his cupidity, poured melted gold into his mouth, and buried him alive. According to the explanation given by the queen to this story, the tower and its images represented the emperor's body and five senses, which his son and the seven sages were plotting to destroy.<sup>1</sup>

X. Next day the fifth sage, named Joseph, tells the story of the learned physician Ypocras, or Hippocrates who, according to the mediæval legend, jealous of the knowledge of his nephew Galien (Galen), treacherously murdered him, and died himself soon after of sorrow for the deed. The sage threatens the emperor with a similar fate, if he puts his son to death.<sup>2</sup>

XI. The next story told by the queen consists, as has been observed by M. Loiseleur Deslongchamps, of two distinct episodes. The first is the story of a king, swollen and disfigured, who employs his seneschal to find him a fair lady for a reward of a thousand florins; and the steward, incited by his covetousness, brings the

<sup>1</sup> The details of this story differ in the two English versions. In both a mirror is substituted for the images. In our text the name of Merlin is substituted for that of Virgil; and the history of the mirror alone is given. The story of Virgil's tower, which was called *salvatio Roma*, holds rather a conspicuous place in the legendary history of the magician. Such a tower is first mentioned, but without the name of Virgil, in a Latin manuscript of the eighth century, in a passage published by Docen, and republished by Keller, in his introduction to the *Sept Sages*. Vincent of Beauvais, in the thirteenth century (and therefore subsequently to the compilation of the Latin romance of the *Historia septem sapientum*), describes Virgil's tower; and it is the subject of a chapter in the legendary history of *Virgilius*. The conclusion of the story seems to be taken from a traditional remembrance of the history of Craffus, whose head was cut off by the Parthians, and molten gold poured into his mouth, to satiate his avarice. The story was, at a later period, taken from the *Historia septem sapientum*, and inserted, with great modifications, into the *Pecorone* of Ser Giovanni [Fiorentino].

<sup>2</sup> This is the story of the second sage in the English versions. It appears to be peculiar to this collection of tales.

king his own wife whom he keeps, and the steward flies into banishment.

In the second episode, the same king lays siege to Rome, demanding that the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul should be delivered up to him. There were in Rome, at that time, seven sages, who undertook to defend the city during seven days. The first six days they succeeded, by their discourses, in preventing the king from making an attack; but he was determined to assault the city on the seventh day, when the last sage, by a cunning stratagem, spread terror among the assailants, who took to flight; and their king, and the greater part of his knights, were slain in the pursuit. The queen warns her husband that his seven sages will be as injurious to him by their tales, as the seven sages in the story were to the king who invaded Rome.<sup>1</sup>

XII. The sixth sage, named Cleophas, tells the story of a woman who promised, separately, to three of the emperor's knights, that they should pass the night with her; and each engages to give her a hundred florins as the price of her favours. After having received the sums agreed upon, the woman causes her three suitors to be murdered by her husband, as they enter the house; and she employs her brother to throw the body of one of the knights into the sea. When the brother returns, she persuades him that the body has come back to the house; and, twice the dupe of the same deceit, he carries away the three bodies, supposing them to be all one, and burns the last in the middle of a wood, to make sure that it shall not return again. But scarcely has he reduced the body to ashes, when a knight, led by his evil star, passes by, and approaches the fire to warm himself. The man supposes it is the dead knight returning, pushes him into the fire, and he also is burnt. Some time after this, the woman, in a fit of rage, accuses her husband of the triple murder, and both receive due punishment for their crime.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These two episodes become separate stories, both placed in the mouth of the queen, in the English versions. In the Latin they seem to recall to mind the Oriental original, in which each person told two stories. The first of them is, in the English text, the seventh in order. It was of Indian origin, and is found in the Greek and Hebrew collections. At a later period it passed into the *Novellino* of Massuccio (printed in 1552); and it is also found in the *Contes du Monde Aventurieux* (Paris, 1582).

The second episode is the thirteenth story of the English version, where the circumstances are modified.

<sup>2</sup> This story is found in the Hebrew version, but not in the Greek or Arabic. It is omitted in the French metrical version and in the English versions, but is inserted in the English compilation of the *Gesta Romanorum*, and occurs as a fabliau under the title of *Les trois boffus*. The fabliau of *Eftourmi* turns also on a somewhat similar plot. The story of *Les trois boffus* is also found in the collection of Straparola, whence it seems to have been derived into the *Contes Tartares* of Gueulette. [An English version is in *Tales of the Minstrels*, 4th edit. p. 24, under the title of *The Three hunch-backed Minstrels*; this volume first appeared in 1786, and is taken from Le Grand's *Fabliaux*.] The Hebrew story runs somewhat as follows:—A woman introduces into her house three hump-backed musicians, who drink till they become drunk. She hears her husband at the door, and conceals

XIII. The queen next tells a story of a king who was so jealous of his wife that he kept her closely shut in his castle, and always carried about with him the keys of her apartment. It happened that a knight of a distant country saw the lady in a dream, and fell in love with her ; and he resolved to travel about until he discovered the object of his passion. At the same time, the queen also dreamt that she saw the knight, with whose appearance she was no less struck. After having wandered through several kingdoms, the knight arrived at length in that of the jealous king, and, passing under the tower in which she was shut up, he saw at a window the lady of whom he was in search. He presented himself to the king, who made him his steward ; and he became so great a favourite of his new master, that he soon obtained permission to build himself a dwelling near the castle. In building this house, the knight caused a subterranean passage to be made, leading into the chamber of the lady in the tower ; and, to hinder his secret from being discovered, he put to death the workmen who had made it. By means of this passage he obtained frequent interviews with the queen. One day, while the king and his steward were hunting together, the king recognized on the knight's finger a ring which he had formerly given to the queen. It was, in fact, a present she had made to her lover. The steward perceived that the king had taken notice of his ring, and, on his return, passed in haste through the subterranean passage, and restored it to the queen. The king also hastened to the queen's apartment, to see if his suspicions were well founded, but was surprised to find that she had still in her possession the ring he had given her. A short time after this, the knight told the king that a beautiful lady, his mistress, had come from his own country to find him ; and that he had prepared a banquet, at which he invited the king to be present. The latter, on his arrival, was astonished at the great similarity between his steward's mistress and his own wife,—for the knight had introduced the queen by means of the subterranean passage. He hastened back to the castle after dinner ; but the subterranean passage offered a shorter road, and he found his wife in her chamber in her ordinary attire. The king was now so entirely thrown off his guard, that he was made to be a witness of the marriage of the two lovers, giving the lady with his own hand ; and the knight, who had a ship ready, set sail with his prize. When the king retired to his castle, he no longer found the queen in her chamber. The queen, in the romance before us,

---

them hurriedly in a place full of holes and traps, in which they fall, and are strangled. When her husband is gone, she opens the door to relieve them from their hiding-place, and is in despair at finding them all dead. The servant calls a black slave ; and the lady promises to yield to his embraces if he will rid her of the bodies. This he agrees to do, and immediately carries them away, and throws them into the river. It is probable that the printed text of the Hebrew version is an imperfect one ; and that, originally, the story ended in the same manner as in the *Historia Septem Sapientum*.

advises her husband not to let himself be the dupe of his sages, as the king in the story had been that of his seneschal.<sup>1</sup>

XIV. The story told by the seventh master, Joachim, is only a disfigured copy of the well-known tale of the matron of Ephesus, which reappears under a great variety of forms in the literature of the middle ages.

XV. The young prince, on the eighth day, can speak with safety; and he tells a long story of a youth, named Alexander, who was endowed with the knowledge of the language of birds. Hearing one day the nightingale, he told his father that the bird predicted that he should eventually rise to so high a position in the world, that his father would humbly offer him water to wash his hands, and that his mother would with equal humility hold the towel to wipe them. The father was so enraged at this prognostic, that he took his son out to sea in a boat, and threw him into the deep. The child, however, swam until he was taken up by a vessel bound for Egypt, where having, for the satisfaction of the king, interpreted the cry of two ravens, he obtains, as a reward, the hand of his daughter, and, after her father's death, succeeds him to the crown of Egypt. Before his marriage he visits the court of the emperor, where he goes through the same adventures as those which form the plot of the beautiful and once popular romance of *Amis and Amiloun*. After Alexander became king of Egypt, he sent for his father and mother, and the prophecy of the nightingale was accomplished.<sup>2</sup>

After the prince has told his story, the queen is brought to judgment, and condemned to be burnt alive, along with a boy who had been discovered, in disguise, among her chambermaids. The latter incident is not found in the English version. Sometime after this, the emperor dies, and his son Dioclesian succeeds him.

The preceding sketch will show the history of this romance before it took its English dress, and will exhibit, in some measure, the materials of which it was formed. Various versions and imitations appeared at a later period; [but the most curious volume for those interested in early English literature, is the prose version with large woodcuts, printed by W. de Worde very early in the sixteenth century, and reprinted by W. Copland about 1550];<sup>3</sup> and finally it took the humble form of a chap book, under the [old] title of *The Seven*

<sup>1</sup> This story appears to be taken from some Eastern collection, for a similar one is found in Von Hammer's supplementary stories of the *Thousand and One Nights*. It, however, bears an evident analogy to the plot of the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus, from which, perhaps, it was indirectly derived. It occupies the same position in the English texts as in the Latin.

<sup>2</sup> In the English versions, as in the old French metrical version, all the portion of the story taken from the romance of *Amis and Amiloun* is omitted. The story found in the *Cento novelle* of Sansovino (Giorn. viii. nov. 4), and among the novels of Lope de Vega, *El prometido cumplido*.

<sup>3</sup> [In 1578 a translation into Scotch metre by John Rolland, of Dalkeith, was published at Edinburgh.]

*Wise Masters.* The order and form of the tales in this collection show that it had come directly, or indirectly, from the Latin version. The *Seven Wise Mistresses* is a very paltry imitation of it. There were also later imitations of the same romance in the East, such as the *Forty Viziers* of the Turks, and the history of Prince Bakhtyar and the ten Viziers.

The two English metrical versions are altogether different compositions; but they contain the same stories in the same order, and were evidently translated from the same original, which appears to have been different from the French metrical version published by Prof. Keller. There is also an early French prose version, published by M. Le Roux de Lincy, which resembles more the French metrical version than the Latin text. The variations in the English text will be best shown by the following table of its contents, with comparative indications of the same tales as found in the Greek, Latin, and French metrical version. It will be seen, that four only of the stories found in the Eastern original are retained in the medieval romance built upon it:—

Contents of the English Version.	Syntagma.	Latin.	French.
The tree and its branch . . . . .	—	1	1
The knight and his greyhound . . . . .	12	2	2
The boar and the herdsman . . . . .	11	3	5
Ypocras and his nephew . . . . .	—	10	4
The robber of the treasury . . . . .	—	5	9
The husband shut out . . . . .	—	4	6
The king and his steward . . . . .	9	11	3
The old man and his wife . . . . .	—	8	8
Merlin's pillar . . . . .	—	9	13
The burges and his parrot . . . . .	2	6	10
The emperor and Merlin . . . . .	—	7	11
The sheriff, his widow, and the knight . . . . .	—	14	12
The seven clerks of Rome . . . . .	—	11	7
The two dreams . . . . .	—	13	14
The ravens . . . . .	—	15	15

[For an account of the early printed copies in various languages, we may refer to the last edition of the *Manuel du Libraire*, which omits, however, to record what is probably the oldest impression in German, as well as W. de Worde's edition. The German book, which is without printer's name or any other indication, but evidently appeared about 1470, is a small folio of seventy-six leaves, reckoning a blank at the beginning, and bears the following title: “Die nach volget ein gar schön Cronick vnd histori Aufz den geschichtē der Romeon/In welcher histori vnd Cronick niā vndet gar vil schöner vnd mezlicher exemplē die gar lustich vnd kurzweilig zehören seint. At the end: Hie endet sich die Cronick vnd histori mit seiner geistlichē vzlegung vnd glosen die man nempt der

siben meister buch," &c. The collation is: A, 8 leaves; B, 6 leaves; C, 8 leaves; D, 6 leaves; E, F and G, in eights; H, 6 leaves; I, 8 leaves; K, 10 leaves (if at least the last, a blank, belongs to the book). Ebert does not seem to have met with a copy; and the auctioneer's catalogue, where the book occurred for sale, describes it as also unknown to Panzer.

The edition printed by Wynkyn de Worde varies in some particulars from the MSS. which we possess in our language; but as an analysis of the volume is given elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> it will not be necessary to dwell on that point further here.]

The manuscripts of the English romance of the *Seven Sages* are not common, although, as has been already observed, we find two distinct versions. The one which I have given to the public is printed from a manuscript in the Public Library of the University of Cambridge (known by the shelf-mark, D d. 1, 17), which appears to have been written about the end of the fourteenth century. The other version was printed by Weber<sup>2</sup> from copies preserved in the celebrated Auchinleck MS. at Edinburgh, and in MS. Cotton, Galba, E. ix. Another copy, much mutilated, of this version, but presenting many readings different from Weber's edition, is preserved in a MS. in the Public Library of the University of Cambridge, Ff. ii. 38. The following lines, which occur at fol. 126, will serve as a specimen:—

“ Some tyme ther was a noble man,  
Whos name was clepyd Dyaclyfyan,  
Of ryche Ryme and that honour  
Lorde he was and emperour.  
An emperyece he had to wyfe,  
The fayref that myghte bere lyfe :  
A feyre lady and a gente.  
Hur name was clepyd dame Ilacent.  
A man chylde they had betwene them two,  
The fayref that myghte on erthe goo,  
That was to them bothe lefe and dere.  
Lyfsteneyth now and ye may here :  
So hyt befelle upon a daye  
The emperyece syke sche lay :  
Soche an evyllie was come hur upon,  
That sche myȝt nodur ryde nor goon,  
Nor she myȝt no lenger leve  
For drynkys that lechys myȝt hur geve.  
Now ys sche dedd, and wende hur way,  
God hur sowle yuge may  
Odur to peyne, or to blysse,  
Whedur that hys wylle ys !  
Let we now that lady dwelle,  
And of the emperour y wylle yow telle.  
Thys emperour waxe olde and hore,  
And thought to sett hys sone to lore,

[<sup>1</sup> By Mr. Furnivall, in his account of the books described by Laneham as having been in the possession of Capt. Cox, of Coventry (Ballad Society, 1870).]

<sup>2</sup> *Metrical Romances*, vol. iii.

And comawndyd anon before hym to come  
.vii. of the wyeleste clerkys of Rome.  
Now lordyngys, he seyde, gente,  
Aftur yow .vij. y have sente ;  
I wylle my sone betake yow,  
To lerne hym wytt and vertue;  
Whyche of you dar my sone undertake,  
To lerne hym that that ys wretton yn the letters blake.

Thorow councelle of hys bolde barons,  
He weddyd a wyfe of grete renounys ;  
Thorow covetyle of erytage  
They made soon the maryage,  
Sythen aftur yn lytulle space  
Befelle a fulle wondur case.  
Let we now alle thys dwelle,  
And of the .vii. maysters y wylle yow telle.  
Thes .vii. clerkyx there they stode  
Wolde wete yf the chylde cowde ony gode,  
And wete yf hys wyttyx were feyre and clere  
That he had lernyd that .vii. yere.  
The chyldyns bedd was made on lofte  
Fulle efly and fulle softe.  
They toke levys syxtene,  
..... that were rounde and grene,  
..... hede for sothe to lay,  
..... ys and went ther way.  
..... chylde to hys reste,  
..... that the day was preste,  
..... tyrs seven." ]



END OF VOLUME I.







